

ible (Psalms)

Cancelled from
Gladstone's Library

24 JUL 2024



W. E. Gladstone

St. Deiniol's Library
Hawarden, Chwyd

Founded by
The Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone

3.27
e.24
25.3
60



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/bwb_KU-359-357

THE PSALMS
OR
THE BOOK OF PRAISES

ST. DEINIG'S

HAWARDEN.

THE PSALMS

OR

THE BOOK OF PRAISES

*A New Transcription
and Translation*

Arranged Strophically and Metrically From a
Critically Reconstructed Text

WITH

Introduction, Textual Notes, and Glossary

BY

HERBERT H. GOWEN, D.D., F.R.As.Soc.

Professor of Oriental Studies
University of Washington

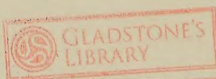


STUDENT CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT PRESS
32, Russell Square, London, W. C. 1

First published in Great Britain, 1930
All rights reserved

Cancelled from
Gladstone's Library

24 JUL 2024



EDITORIAL NOTE

THE DREAM of most Old Testament scholars is to make a translation of the Psalms, based upon a scientifically corrected Hebrew text. Many have tried it; few have succeeded in it. To be successful, a scholar must not only be a master in the science of Hebrew prose and poetical composition—he must not only possess a sympathetic insight in the heart of ancient Hebrew thinkers, but also he must be himself a poet. All these qualifications are possessed in a very large measure by Dr. Gowen. Moreover, only a close student of the Old Testament can appreciate the immense amount of work, in textual study, metrical discrimination, and in interpretation, which lies behind these beautiful renderings and their accompanying critical notes. Unending pleasure has been mine in reading these translations, and the same is in store for all who do likewise.

SAMUEL A. B. MERCER.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. DO WE KNOW THE PSALTER?	I
II. THE PRINCIPLES OF HEBREW POETRY . .	13
III. THE MAKING OF THE PSALTER	21
IV. THE POETRY OF THE PSALMS	31
V. THE USE OF THE PSALTER	42
THE PSALMS	
Book I. Psalms I-XLI	55
Book II. Psalms XLII-LXXII	173
Book III. Psalms LXXIII-LXXXIX . .	255
Book IV. Psalms XC-CVI	309
Book V. Psalms CVII-CL	357
GLOSSARY	467

CHAPTER I.

DO WE KNOW THE PSALTER?

IT WAS A SAYING of Confucius that, were he assured of a continuance of life for fifty years, he would gladly devote them all to further study of *The Book of Changes*. With better reason for their enthusiasm, not a few students of Bible Literature have longed for larger leisure that they might employ life in obtaining deeper knowledge of the world's best-known hymn-book, the Hebrew Psalter.

Such a desire, in many cases the unexhausted product of a life-time's devout familiarity, has in our own day stronger justification than of old, when the delight was mainly that in an English version recited from childhood onward in the public worship of the Church.

These are days when the comparative method, in matters religious and literary, as well as scientific, makes to most men a special appeal. We learn, with Shelley, that

"Nothing by itself is single;
All things, by a law divine,
With one another's being mingle."

Hence we have come to see that the study of the *Book of Psalms* has a wider range than our forefathers

guessed. For one thing, we have come to see that the poetry of the Psalms, in method as well as matter, has a very real kinship with the religious poetry of ancient times in Eastern lands. Just as a new significance has been given to the whole religious history of Israel by the recognition of her community in language, race, law, and primitive conceptions of God and of society, with the surrounding peoples, so is it proving to be the case even with that part of her literature which is set apart as most sacred and distinctive. As Dr. Hugo Gressman has said: "There is no reason for doubting that the psalms of the Old Testament have been influenced by the psalms of other nations."

In this, of course, there need be no suspicion of diminishing values. It is, for example, no discredit to Hebrew literature to allow that a certain section of the *Book of Proverbs* has been in large part borrowed from the Egyptian *Instructions of Amenemope*, written somewhere about B.C. 1000. Similarly, there is no ground for thinking less of the Psalter when we discover the remarkable affinity which exists between the "How long!" of some of our psalms with the liturgical formulae of ancient Babylonian poetry. Nor do we delight less in the *Creation Psalm* (104) because we find it closely resembling the great *Hymn to Atun* of the "heretic king," Amenhotep IV. One need not even be afraid to accept the first part of Psalm 19 as an ancient hymn to the sun-god Shamash, adapted for Hebrew hymnody. The significance of such examples as these is neither more nor less than the significance we find in the relation of the Creation and Flood stories of Gen-

esis to their remote originals in the *Epic of Gilgamesh* or other Babylonian literature. It becomes clear that the comparative study of the poetry of the Psalter (particularly insisted upon by some recent scholars), so far from reflecting on its uniqueness, should do much towards accounting for the universal appeal the book has always had for the heart of humanity.

Another aspect of this significance is to be found in the fact that, if the Psalter does not begin with the prayers and praises of the Temple at Jerusalem, neither does it cease to develop with the close of the Jewish dispensation. The natural transition from Hebrew psalmody to Christian hymnody is as important as the transition from the litanies of Babylon to the songs of Zion. The fact is so apparent that we almost cease to take notice of it, that the New Testament opens with a revival of the Psalter in such hymns as those of Zacharias, the Blessed Virgin, and of Simeon. Words from the psalms fall naturally from the lips of Christ, in the days of His ministry, and from the Cross on Calvary. The Apostles burst spontaneously into the language of psalmody in the Upper Room at Jerusalem. Hebrew psalms suggest the matter of some of the oldest hymns of the Greek liturgies. Later on, the monastic orders made the recitation of the Psalter their daily devotional exercise. So far was this pious habit from being repudiated by the Puritans that these used them so continuously as to win for themselves the epithet of "psalm-singers." The first hymn-books of Reformed Christendom were nothing else but metrical versions of the psalms. Still today, whatever may be the developments

of ecclesiastical music, our best loved hymns continue to be translations of psalms, such as "O God, our help in ages past." "As pants the hart for cooling streams," or "All people that on earth do dwell." Out of this constant public use has grown that private use of and association with the Psalter which is so strikingly illustrated in Mr. Prothero's *The Psalms in Human Life*. And, once again, we find that the influence of the Psalter in English literature (to say nothing of that of other lands) has been such that the subject could only be adequately treated in a volume. From Chaucer and from Shakespeare (who probably gained his familiarity with the Psalms as a choir-boy at Stratford) to Milton and Bacon and Wordsworth and Cowper and the Brownings and Ruskin and Carlyle, even to Byron and Swinburne, we have an unbroken catena of witnesses to the attraction these old hymns of the Jewish Church had upon the great interpreters of our English tongue.

Yet here we come face to face with the remarkable fact, which is the primary excuse for the present volume, that, with all the constant and sympathetic use, possibly even because of this use (of a certain sort) the psalms remain a little understood part of Holy Scripture. I once took part in an experiment to find out what proportion of the phrases and expressions of the English Psalter (in the Prayer Book version) were intelligible to the habitual user of the book. The result was appalling, as showing the extent to which we repeat glibly (and even reverently) with our lips what we in no real sense understand. Yet we still, month by month, repeat our daily selections, though the best known of all

our versions is but the translation of a translation of a translation of a lamentably imperfect text. And the excuse generally put forth for persisting in this use, in preference to another, is that it sings itself better than correcter versions. In other words, we feel it to be more religious to be lulled by the beauty of the sound than edified by the apprehension of a meaning. One is reminded of words in the *Autobiography of Father Tyrrell* (I, 16): "I still have to set right, by reflex action, the absurd interpretations which I then put upon the sounds as they entered my ears: *Jesus-tender*; *Shepherd-hear-me* were two polysyllabic words for me for many years after, and it is even now an effort for me to analyze them; and *Rocka Vages* has associations that *Rock of Ages* can never have." Most of us have experiences of the kind and, fortunately, an approach to God in worship may be so sincere that mistranslations and misunderstandings are no absolute bar to spiritual ecstasy. A fine example of this may be found in Mr. C. R. Ashbee's description of a soldier's service in Palestine soon after the rout of the Turkish armies by General Allenby:

"You would have been thrilled to hear the English soldiers shouting the 68th Psalm in Church last Sunday: for we are still in the blast of our great victory here, eighty thousand prisoners! and in addition had just had the news of the fresh success of the Western front, the victory at Cambrai, the revenge for Le Cateau.

"'Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered: let them also that hate Him flee before Him.' . . .

"The thin little Syrian trebles in the choir, even with the organ to help them, were overwhelmed, and the basses

at the back of the nave got quite out of hand and went romping ahead. . . .

"Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove, that is covered with silver wings and her feathers like gold. . . .' No one knew exactly what that meant, but it sounded well and went with gusto."*

Mistranslation, I repeat, is no invariable bar to edification. There is what might be called the inspiration of misinterpretation, as well as the inspiration of interpretation (a fact to which many of our unlearned but not unsuccessful preachers are indebted). In the Psalter we may recall instances of this which are gloriously, even miraculously, edifying. It is still possible for devout worshippers to include in their praises such rubrical directions as: "Bind the sacrifice with cords, even to the horns of the altar" (118: 27), or: "Singers and pipers all together," or even to make religious use of the errors of copyists which have no textual authority whatsoever.

All this, without doubt, is mercifully tolerated by God, who looks upon the intention rather than upon the performance, but it will, nevertheless, be conceded that an intelligent use of praise, and the taking of pains to make praise intelligent, will have some decided advantage over the present usage. To sing with the spirit is good, but to sing also with the understanding is better (I Cor. 14: 15). If pains taken by choirs in the rendering of beautiful music are praiseworthy, why should not choirs and congregations alike (not to speak of composers) take pains to understand what is set to the music?

* *A Palestine Note Book*. C. R. Ashbee, pp. 82 ff.

It is necessary to examine with some care the real source of our failure, after nineteen centuries of Christian use. Of course, the fault is partly with the translators, who have been too timid to depart widely from the generally received versions. It lies partly also with the ultra-conservative attitude of the general public who are morbidly afraid lest the adoption of an unfamiliar version should imperil the security of the Ark. The exporter's label "Gods, with care," applies to many other fetishes than those which find a sale in China or India. But, for the real source of trouble, we must go further, to the text. As a matter of fact, "the noble army of translators" have done as valiantly as was possible within their prescribed limits. Yet, as even Dr. Moffatt's scholarly translation bears witness, the new translations do not succeed as they should in making the poetry of Israel the real possession of Christian devotion. The reason is manifestly that the majority of translators have had qualms about going back of the accepted text. This is the *damnosa hereditas* left us by the Masoretic editors of the Hebrew Bible. Had we been as insistent upon the sacrosanctity of a single text in the case of the Greek classics, we should hardly have done better with Aeschylus than with the Psalter. The real concern of modern interpreters of the psalms must be necessarily first with the text and only secondarily with the translation. The translation will more or less take care of itself when we have had the requisite courage and patience to deal adequately with the reconstruction of the text.

It has long been the fashion to overestimate the care

with which the Hebrew people protected the text of their sacred literature. The fact has been almost wholly ignored that the undoubted scrupulousness of the Jew as to the alteration of even obvious errors came too late to be of any particular value. The stable-door was only shut after the horse had been stolen. The Masorah, by which the Hebrew text, somewhat over a thousand years ago, was made uniform, is worthy of its name, which signifies *fetter*. To create a uniform text by the ruthless destruction of all variant readings is, of course, to lay the foundation for a huge fabric of textual difficulty, much of which may never be removed. In the case of the New Testament the same evil result would have been attained had we substituted for the patient and careful collation of a multitude of varying readings, spread over many hundreds of manuscripts, the rough and ready way of destroying all but one of the documents in question. That was the uncritical way in which the successors of Muhammad disposed of differences in the Quran, to save contention over variations by the acceptance of many things which were obviously wrong—even though no method was preserved for arriving at what was right. So far as the Psalter is concerned, our present text is based upon the revision of Rabbi Ben Asher in the 10th century. Some variations the copyists did feel bound to record, but rather than incorporate the corrections in the text they placed them in the foot-notes, with the injunction: "Read this: not that." So we have really two texts on the same page, one the *Kthibh*, or text as it is written, too sacred to be displaced, though acknowledged to be

wrong, and the *Q'ri*, or text to be read, though consigned to the ignoble estate of a foot-note.

I have now answered the question at the head of this chapter with a regretful negative, and have also attempted to show the real difficulty which a conscientious interpreter of the Psalter has to face in a faulty text. The recovery of a true text, therefore, is the main problem to be solved if the Psalter is to be satisfactorily elucidated. Instead of following commentators who begin with the exegesis of a translation of an obviously imperfect text, we must attempt the reverse method. Let us first secure an adequate text (if this be at all recoverable); next let us make an honest translation; and then there is some chance that the resulting exegesis will be correct.

I must take the remainder of this chapter for a preliminary discussion of the question: How may we contrive to recover a text more satisfactory than the one we have criticized?

There will recur to mind several methods which have proved fruitful in the reconstruction of classical texts.

First, we may obtain assistance by comparison of the Masoretic text with the *Greek versions*, that is, the version known as the Septuagint (from the tradition that it was the work of seventy Jewish scholars), made in Alexandria in the 2nd century B.C., and, to a less extent, the subsequent Greek versions of Theodotion, Aquila, and Symmachus. Since the Greek of these versions was by no means of first-rate classical quality, it was the opinion of scholars until recently that these

translations were of little value, the work of men who neither understood the classical Greek nor were well acquainted with the Hebrew original. But today a different opinion prevails and the versions have already proved themselves of great service in establishing the fact that the translators had at hand other texts than that which was later accepted by the Masorah. Thus, although the full results of the comparative method have not hitherto been made available for users of the Psalter, enormous assistance towards the reconstruction of certain ambiguous passages has been rendered. It is always wise for the student, when he comes upon a difficult piece of text, to betake himself to the Septuagint in the hope (not always a vain one) of getting some clue to a solution.

Secondly, some consideration must be given to potential aid from what are known as *conjectural emendations*. This is not a mere learned term for guesses, though thousands of guesses may be offered which few scholars are able to accept. Conjectural emendations are frequently the product of the soundest scholarship, combined sometimes with an intuition such as may suggest inspiration. Some emendations, of course, require little of this intuition, since they are obvious almost at the first glance. For instance, there is no particular difficulty, even to the beginner in Hebrew, in seeing that *lo'* (*not*) of Is. 9:3 and of Psalm 100:3 should be *lo* (*to him, or it*). So we get the renderings: "Thou hast multiplied the nation and increased its joy" instead of the old translation: "Thou hast multiplied the nation and not increased its joy," and: "It is He that hath made us and we are His" instead of: "It is He that

hath made us and not we." The two words confused are pronounced alike and a copyist paying attention only to the sound might well be excused for his mistake. No textual critic today, however conservative, would object to emendations such as this. There is, however, a danger in conjectural emendations, since even the sanest scholars are sometimes the unconscious victims of their enthusiasms. It is for this reason that a third method is particularly welcome.

This third method is that which has been, for the most part, employed in such reconstructions of the text of the Psalter as are adopted in these pages. It is based upon the desirability of regaining the metrical and strophical plan which was evidently that of the original authors. As in the reconstruction of an English poem which, through constant recopying and unintelligent misinterpretation, had become obscure, we should find ourselves feeling around for dropped rhymes, for interpolated phrases destructive of the metre, or for alterations inconsistent with the arrangement of the poem into its stanzas, so in the study of the psalms. Here, with a certain end in view, we shall find ourselves on the alert for broken rhythms, for lines too long or too short, for strophes marred by the addition of glosses, or even for the addition of entire poems of a later time or a different character. Complete success, of course, in a quest of this sort is hardly in every case to be expected, but the falling short of perfection in this respect is less to be dreaded than the deliberate retention of obviously corrupt and often unintelligible psalms for use in the public worship of the Church.

In order, however, that we may come to closer quarters with this method and its justification, it will be necessary to devote a few pages to a brief account of the general principles which governed the composition of Hebrew poetry.

CHAPTER II.

THE PRINCIPLES OF HEBREW POETRY.

NOT A FEW people have concluded from the manner in which the psalms have been translated that they must have been written in something like free verse, or at any rate with an absence of form which makes them resemble prose rather than poetry. But it may safely be said that there is hardly any national poetry (unless it be the Japanese) which shows more attention bestowed upon form than does the Hebrew. The following are some of the elements of Hebrew verse form which are of most importance. I commence with those which are the most obvious:

1. *Parallelism*, or the rhythm of thought expressed in the relation of the separate lines of a couplet or verse. Any psalm will illustrate this, and if this thought-rhythm is absent some corruption of the text may be suspected. But there are several kinds of parallelism. *Synonymous* parallelism is where the two lines of the verse say the same thing in different words; as in 19:8:

"The Law of Yahweh is perfect, refreshing the soul:
The Testimony of Yahweh is faithful, rejoicing the heart.'

Synthetic parallelism is when the second line adds a further development to the statement in the first line; as in 23: 5:

"Thou spreadest before me a table in sight of my foes:
Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup overfloweth."

Antithetic parallelism is that in which the second line adds to the statement of the first its opposite, or complementary, truth; as so often in the Proverbs. In Psalm 17: 15 we have:

"Let their sons be sated and leave what remains to their seed;
I—in righteousness let me gaze on Thy face: with the sight
of Thy form be satisfied!"

To the above-mentioned common kinds of parallelism Briggs adds three more, namely, the *Emblematic*, the *Stairlike*, and the *Introverted*. The *Emblematic* enforces the lesson of the first member of the verse with a natural emblem; as in 37: 1, 2:

"Fret not thyself as to the wicked:
Distress not thyself with the doers of evil.
For like unto grass they shall speedily wither:
Yea, like the green herbage, shall fade away."

The *Stairlike* is that in which the effect of the verse is heightened by a gradual piling up of the thought through an addition of phrase to phrase; as in 29: 1:

"Yield ye to Yahweh, ye sons of God:
Yield ye to Yahweh glory and might!
Yield ye to Yahweh the glory of His Name:
Bow down to Yahweh in the courts of His holiness!"

or 96: 13:

"For He cometh:
For He cometh to judge the earth."

And *Introverted* parallelism is that in which the lines of a quatrain are so arranged that line 1 finds its parallel in 4, and 2 and 3 are enclosed as it were in an envelope.

Of course also there are many combinations of these various methods, but in one form or another parallelism may be considered the most evident mark of true Hebrew poetry.

2. The *Strophe*. Though well disguised in our English versions, most of the psalms are arranged in stanzas or strophes. From the point of view of our attempted reconstruction, this is a matter of considerable importance. For, when the strophe fails in completeness, or when one or more of the regular refrains are omitted, the reader will at once be entitled to surmise an explanation in some corruption of the text. For example, in 80, one may assume that the refrain:

“Yahweh of Hosts, restore us:

Let Thy face shine that we may be saved!”

has in two of the strophes been taken for granted and omitted from the text. In the interesting case of 42-43 we may see from the form of the strophe and the refrain that the two psalms are in fact one, with a refrain to each of the strophes which should run:

“Why, O my soul, cast down and troubled upon me?

Hope thou in God, for still will I praise Him,

For the help of His presence—my God!”

The irregularity of the first refrain (v. 5 E.V.) is seen to be due to the carrying over of certain letters to the following verse in the Masoretic text. The restora-

tion once made, we have a poem of singular symmetry as well as of exquisite beauty.

3. *Rhyme*. Though not an invariable feature of Hebrew poetry, rhyme (or at least assonance) is strikingly exemplified in many of the psalms. Where used, it is very effective. Some psalms have strophes which seem intended to close every line with some long-drawn-out pronominal suffix—an *î* or a *û* or *kā*. It is not generally possible to render this in translation, though we may judge the effect if we try (for example, in Psalm 6) to translate each line with a final *me*:

“O Yahweh, do not in Thine anger rebuke *me*,” etc.

It will frequently happen that in such psalms one or more lines fail to correspond with the general scheme. In that case an easily removable gloss may frequently be detected, or some slight corruption of a word or a word ending.

4. *Acrostic*. Eight of the psalms, namely, 9-10, 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119, and 145, are written acrostically, following in successive verses, or couplets, or stanzas, the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The original purpose of this form was doubtless that it should serve as a mnemonic, and it is therefore certain that any irregularities we may find are due to textual corruption. In the work of restoring the original acrostic, assistance is sometimes obtainable by comparison with the Greek. For example, in 37, the *Ayin* verse, and in 145 the *Nun* verse, are lacking in the Hebrew, but may be restored from the Septuagint. In other cases, where the Greek affords no help, the alterations made are frequently

obvious, as in 9-10, where the complete acrostic has been divided into two separate psalms and the separated portions adapted by additions made for liturgical purposes. In some psalms the acrostic is intentionally partial, but even in this case progress towards a reconstruction of the text is made by taking note of the probably intended scheme. An interesting example is 110, where the name of the High Priest *Simon* is used acrostically. In such a case, the discovery is historically as well as metrically suggestive.

5. *Metre*. All that is said above as to the form of Hebrew poetry is of considerably less importance than the results which are discoverable by the study of metre. Metrical studies in Hebrew are still at a rather early stage, but enough has been ascertained to suggest the extreme value of research in this direction from the point of view of textual improvement. From the time of Bishop Lowth in the 18th century to the time of Ley, Briggs, and Buchanan Gray, it has been perceived, first, that the Hebrew poets *did* use metre and, secondly, that the original metrical system has been largely forgotten and overlaid in later revisions of the Psalter. As to the causes of this, something will be said later, but it is a curious fact that the Jews did not recover the use of metre until the Middle Ages and that then, instead of reverting to their own former system, they adopted that of the Arabs.

A few words may perhaps be necessary as to what constitutes metre in the poetry of Israel. Metre, it must be remembered, is not dependent upon the number of syllables in a line, but upon the number of tones or

beats. Two words may run together to make a single tone, but the tones are unmistakable; as in the tetrameter line:

“Like wárrriors they rún, like sóldiers they advance.”

When this principle is recognized it is soon realized that Hebrew poetry is exceedingly well fitted to express itself in a great variety of metres. Trimeter and tetrameter are the favorites, but we also have poems in dimeter, pentameter, and hexameter. A common metre for elegiac poetry is that known as the *qinah*, which consists of pentameter lines, each line broken by a caesura after the third tone. This is effectively used in the *Pilgrim Psalms*; as, for example:

“I will lift up mine eyes to the hills:

Whence cometh my help?

My help is from Yahweh:

Maker of Heaven and Earth!

May He not suffer thy foot to totter:

May not thy Keeper drowse!

He shall not drowse; He shall not slumber:—

Keeper of Israel!”

It should now be obvious that lines in a psalm which are found to be metrically irregular may reasonably be regarded as offering themselves for amendment, and the emendation may be attempted by a combination of the methods outlined above.

One good example of this combination of method may be adduced from Psalm 4: 2. As our present text stands, the only possible translation is:

“O ye sons of men, how long (will ye turn) my glory to shame?

Delight ye in vanity?”

One feels instinctively that something is wrong, since the first line is too long and the second too short. What is it? We first consult the Septuagint and discover that the first line runs as translated from the Greek:

“O ye sons of men, how long are ye stupid?”

the “stupid” being in the Greek ‘βαρυκάρδιοι’ (lit. *heavy of heart*). Now returning to the Hebrew we find that the alteration of a single letter (b for k) and a redivision of the words will give us: ‘*k’bhōday lēbh|lāmāh . . .*’ (*heavy of heart? Why?*) instead of ‘*k’bhōday l’klīmah*’ (*my glory to shame*). So the reconstructed verses, metrically correct and agreeing with the Greek, now run:

“O ye sons of men, how long are ye stupid?”

Wherefore delight ye in vanity?”

We have by no means been exhaustive in our account of the principles of Hebrew poetry. Much might be said as to the use of *onomatopoeia*, that nice use of consonants and vowels by which the emotions of the poet are brought out, sometimes with startling vividness. It has been well said that “In Hebrew, to call with the throat is to speak with vehemence. The dry climate and large leisure of the East bestow on the lower chords of the voice a greater depth and suppleness; and Orientals have elaborated their throat letters to a number unmarked in any Western alphabet.” With this quality of the poetic form, however, we have no immediate concern and it is probable that no translation could ever reproduce the force and beauty which belong to the original sounds.

Our chief concern will be to use the principles of poetic form as a test for the recovery of the psalms in their original strophes and metres. It may be too daring an enterprise. The story is told that when Joshua ben Levi was employed in the arrangement of the Psalter a voice was heard from heaven, saying: "Disturb not the slumberer!" (*i.e.*, the Psalmist in his grave). If no such voice is heard in the Christian world today, doubtless there will be many voices uplifted from the earth. Nevertheless, in a matter which concerns so vitally the intelligence and the sincerity of Christian worship the disturbance of some slumberous traditions seems but a small risk to run.

CHAPTER III.

THE MAKING OF THE PSALTER.

AS THE Book of Psalms stands, it presents the appearance of a unity, the *Psalter*—a word which, of course, is really the name of an instrument of music rather than that of a collection of poems—the *Book of Psalms*—which really signify poems instrumentally accompanied—or, in the Hebrew, *T'hillim*, or Praises. But the unity is the result of late editorial revision and, in order to understand how it was possible for the text to become corrupted, it is necessary to say something of the process by which the compilation of the Psalter was achieved.

The original *T'hillah* (Praise) was nothing else but the *Praise-shout* which accompanied the ceremonial slaughter of an ox or sheep. It was, as Dr. Robertson Smith has pointed out, an expression of thanksgiving to God as the giver of all life and an acknowledgment of His right to share with the offerer in a communion feast. The Praise-shout never completely disappeared from Hebrew psalmody. Again and again it appears as a congregational act (extemporized or ritualized) interpolated into the rendering of the psalms by priests and choir. In Psalm 3: 7a ("Arise, Yahweh, save us, O

my God!") at the close of Strophe III, it takes the place of the *Selah* which occurs at the close of the other strophes. The usual place for a Praise-shout, as may be seen by reference to many of the psalms, was at the kindling of the fire upon the altar. We have a description of a ritual act of this kind in II Chr. 7: 3: "And all the children of Israel looked on, when the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord was upon the house; and they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped and gave thanks unto the Lord, saying, For He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever." (See also I Chr. 16: 36.)

In course of time simple and spontaneous Praise-shouts accompanying the sacrificial act began to form but one element in the rendering of hymns of a more literary type, and the priesthood of particular shrines, in the North as well as at the central shrine at Jerusalem, began to exercise their poetic faculty as well as their piety in the composition of T'hillim. It would be as impossible to trace the authorship of these early religious poems as to discover the real names of the Vedic rishis.

But, ere long, these individual psalms, associated with the ritual use of different communities, came to be collected into comparatively small hymnals, which not infrequently bore the names of local guilds and priesthoods, such as the sons of Korah or the sons of Asaph. When, at a later time, these collections were taken up for use at the Temple at Jerusalem, considerable change was often necessary to make them suitable. In the earliest periods of Hebrew poetry there was, of

course, no great distance between the use of a liturgical hymn and what we call imitative magic. As in Psalm 80, the call to God that He would shine upon the congregation was closely associated with the ritual act of kindling the sacrificial fire. The creation of a light on earth was something more than a symbol of the shining of God's face from heaven. Therefore, when the local shrines ceased to exist, after the fall of Samaria and the Reformation of Josiah, and when Asaphites, Korahites, and the like, had become parts of the Jerusalem choirs, it was natural that the hymn-books they brought with them to the common stock should require some modification of language and of form.

Perhaps it was coincidently with the compilation of these lesser psalters just mentioned that the collection was made at Jerusalem of the so-called Davidic psalms. There was probably never any better reason for assigning a certain number of psalms to David than for assigning the various law-codes to Moses and the various wisdom books to Solomon. Men in those days loved to secure for books the prestige of some famous name and much preferred pseudonymity to anonymity. So in course of time we have the successive editions of the Davidic hymns, namely, the psalms from 3 to 41 and from 51 to 72. Psalm 1 is, of course, a general preface prefixed to the entire Psalter; 2 is a general introduction to the first Davidic collection; and 42 to 49 are Korahitic hymns which have been separated from the others of the same origin, namely, 84, 85, 87, and 88. The second Davidic editor seems to have had a pronounced prejudice against the use of *Yahweh* as a Divine Name,

probably thinking it too nationalistic a term for God as proclaimed by the later prophets. As far as was possible, he substituted the older name *Elohim*, now used in a much more general sense than of old. It is for this reason that we find several psalms (with the alteration of the Divine Name) common to the two collections. Such duplicates are 14 and 53, 40 and 70.

It was after the putting forth of the two last-named collections that three new books were added, by the inclusion of some of the aforementioned "little psalters" and by the compilation of new material. In this new material were collections not hitherto mentioned, such as the series of songs for lay-folk known as the *Pilgrim Psalter*, or *Songs of Ascents*, and the hymns known as *Hallels*. The result was a compilation which, with its five divisions, corresponded with the five books of the Pentateuch. As a matter of fact, the last two books (as now arranged) were originally but one, and this was deliberately divided into two to bring the final result to the desired number. These final collections are characterized by an almost entire absence of musical directions.

Now the Psalter is at last complete in the Five Books, as follows: Book I, 1-41; Book II, 42-72; Book III, 73-89; Book IV, 90-106; Book V, 107-150. Each book is closed with a form of *Doxology*, as (at the close of 41) the words:

"Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Israel,
From everlasting to everlasting.
Amen and Amen."

But, complete as it was in its general form, the

Psalter had by this time suffered many startling textual changes—changes serious enough to overlay a good deal of the original arrangement of the separate poems and to disguise in many cases their meaning. Such changes include the following types:

1. *Changes in the Divine Name.* The change from *Yahweh* to *Elohim* has already been mentioned and, as already suggested, it was due to the feeling that, after the passing of Judaism from the nationalistic to the universalistic stage of religion, it was no longer proper to retain the old henotheistic title. So, although the term *Elohim* had earlier a kind of animistic implication, this stage was now so far in the past that the word might be considered as baptized into a new significance and as now referring to the God of all mankind. In the change from the one term to the other, however, some curious verbal changes, such as had not been intended, came about. An example may be found in Psalm 45:6, where in the original poem the word *yihyeh* (shall be) in the line: "Thy throne *shall be* for ever and ever" has been misread as *Yahweh* and promptly altered to *Elohim*, with the result that the line (as translated from the Masoretic text) now runs: "Thy throne, *O God*, is for ever and ever," to the bewilderment of most expositors. It may be added that in the days when Hebrew was written without vowels it was much easier than today to confuse one similar group of consonants with another.

2. In the next place there were many *dislocations* and *combinations* of psalms for liturgical purposes. As illustrations of the combination of psalms we have the

union of two separate poems in Psalms 95, 115, and 127. Psalm 19 also is a good example, where an old hymn to the sun-god, Shamash, has been made the foundation for a more distinctively Jewish hymn on the glory of the Torah. It even seems possible that 23—one of the most familiar to the world in general—has combined in one three separate poems, in different metres and with separate motifs. In this case, however, it may be preferable to assign the result to conscious artistry rather than to composite origin.

As instances of dislocation we have the cutting up of the acrostic 9-10, for liturgical reasons, into two psalms, separated from one another by the insertion of a Praise-shout: "Arise, Yahweh, let not mere man prevail," etc. Psalm 42-43 also has been divided into two unequal parts, to the grievous marring of its symmetry.

3. A third change which is not infrequently to be discovered was in the direction of making *centos* by the interpolation of familiar verses such as might easily occur to the devout mind of a copyist or might seem appropriate from the liturgical point of view. The habit of extemporizing a prayer or a hymn at certain emotional crises of experience is illustrated by the Song of Hannah or the Prayer of Jonah in the Old Testament, and by the songs of Zacharias, Simeon, and the Virgin Mary in the New. The Psalter includes some hymns which are almost a mosaic of well-loved and well-remembered passages. Psalm 135 is a good example, and in 95 it will be noticed that we have two quite different hymns made into one by the insertion of a verse from 100.

4. There were also additions and alterations which were more or less deliberately adopted for historical reasons. Something of the same liberty has been taken in our own hymn-books, when the compilers of the books in question suspected the ordinary user of unfamiliarity with this or that particular allusion. There will recur to mind, for instance, the murdering of Dr. Neale's beautiful translation from the Greek: "Christian, dost thou see them?" where the lines: "How the troops of Midian Prowl and prowl around" have been garbled into: "How the powers of darkness Rage thy steps around." The Hebrew editors probably did not sin so egregiously as this. But in 137, where they supposed that the old hostility of Edom was less rememberable than the overshadowing tyranny of Babylon, they did not hesitate to interpolate *Babylon* and *Daughter of Babylon*, to the wrecking of the metre and the concealment of one main idea of the psalm. Psalm 44 is another example of an old hymn adapted for the dark days of a more recent experience than that which first called it forth. And there are many psalms which betray the fact that the Maccabean editors could scarcely resist historical adaptations of this sort, if only by the insertion of an ejaculatory prayer for vengeance on the foe.

5. *Glosses* are, it is plain, quite frequent and may generally be detected without much trouble by students who are watchful of the metre. One illustration may be given from 29, where the seven-times repeated phrase, "The Voice of Yahweh," has to be explained on its first occurrence by a literal-minded scribe as an allu-

sion to thunder—"The God of glory thundereth." Sometimes the gloss is merely a pious exclamation, a kind of embroidery upon the text, not to be resisted by the copyist.

6. Then we have the copying of *rubrics* as though these were intrinsic parts of the text. It is a striking comment on the unintelligence with which so many use the Psalter today that these rubrics are repeated with as much unction (and apparently with the same degree of edification) as the rest of the sacred poetry. Examples are the following:

Psalm 29:9: "Let all who are in the Temple say, Glory." This is an injunction for the use of a Praise-shout, manifestly excluded from the body of the text by its lack of conformity with the metre.

Psalm 65:13: "Let them shout, yea, let them sing," a similar rubric intended to secure the hearty coöperation of the whole congregation.

Psalm 87:7: "Singers and pipers together," a direction to the choir and musicians to join in the following chorus: "All my foundations in Thee."

Psalm 118:27: "Bind the sacrifice with cords, even to the horns of the altar," a rubrical direction to the priests at the moment of offering the sacrifice.

7. Lastly, we may refer to the confusion caused here and there through the insertion in the text of technical terms for the assistance of the musical director. Such confusion was almost certain to arise as soon as these terms had become unintelligible through the changed character of the cultus. A probable illustration is to be found in the concluding phrase of Psalm 48,

where *Alāmōth* is read as *Al-mūth*. So the translation runs, "unto death," though we have probably a musical note directing the psalm to be sung by the *sopranos* (*Alāmōth*). The word may even belong to the beginning of 49 rather than to the end of 48.

Enough, I trust, has been said to prove that it is worth while, from the point of view of scholar and general reader alike, to attempt some recovery of the first form of the world's most beautiful and significant collection of religious poetry. The present is an effort in this direction and, in doing this, to lay the foundation for such a translation as may make the psalms more understandable and so the better loved, without that laborious study which none but the professional scholar may afford.

It is, of course, inevitable that any attempt at reconstruction must risk a certain margin of error. Nevertheless, enough should certainly be gained of assured value to repay the effort. Even the depolarizing of the familiar expressions which familiarity has rendered meaningless, even while remaining sacrosanct, will do most men good. The preciousness of old associations (often of a verbal sort) need not be depreciated. Such associations have a value of their own, apart, it may be, altogether from the foresight of the writer. Even the glosses which the critical judgment is compelled to reject, as no portion of the original psalm, are not worthless. They are sometimes quite justifiably included in the Sacred Canon, however much they disturb the metre or thought of the original poem. When we remember that there is an inspiration of the reader

as well as an inspiration of the writer, these pious ejaculations of long-forgotten scribes will often come home to us with an astonishing measure of spiritual refreshment. But, as the archaeologist may strip away from the walls of some ancient church the modern fresco which has overlaid and concealed the more precious work of antiquity, so it is my hope that by stripping off the accretions which the ignorance or piety of later times added to the early poetry of the Hebrew people, something may be done towards recovering the spirit as well as the form of mankind's best loved *Book of Praises*.

CHAPTER IV.

THE POETRY OF THE PSALMS.

THE STUDY of any sacred literature must reveal the close relation which has always existed between poetry and the expression of religious feeling. Emotion normally expresses itself rhythmically. The poet, in seeking inspiration, addresses himself to a Power beyond himself, even though, as in the conventional invocation of the Muses, the direction of the appeal is suggested by a mythology rather than a creed.

Hence it is not surprising that a large part of the Old Testament, including much that is scattered here and there through the prose narratives, is poetry, both in form and content. One has only to turn the pages of a translation such as that of Moffatt to become aware of the extent to which the Hebrew scriptures have the character of a collection of poetry. We have folk-poetry, such as the *Song of the Sword* (Gen. 4: 23-24), sung by Lamech to his wives, in which the form accords with the true principles of Hebrew verse, even though the content is the mere bravado of a barbarian vaunt. We have *chanteys*, such as the *Well Song*, of Num. 21: 17-18, in which the desert wanderers "lighten labor with a song." We have *taunt songs*,

such as that terrible "hymn of hate" in Num. 20: 27-30. We have *elegies*, all the way from the only half-articulate utterances of woe to the finished poems of the kind in Ezekiel and the Lamentations. We have splendid *War Odes*, such as that of Moses by the Red Sea (Ex. 15) and that of Deborah (Jud. 5). We have the so-called *Ethical Wills* in the swan-songs of the Patriarchs, Jacob, Moses, and David. In addition, we have the poetry of *prophecy*, all the way from the half-reluctant utterances of Balaam to the inspired strains of the Evangelical Prophet. And, beyond all this, we have the poetry of *drama*, the poetry of *proverbial philosophy*, and the poetry of *apocalypse*.

Yet, without dispute, the crown of all Hebrew poetry is the lyrical poetry of the Psalter, the fine flower of all Semitic literature, even as the Rig-Veda is the fine flower of the earliest Aryan song.

All true poetry will express itself both in outward form and in inner content, even as humanity needs for its expression both a body and a soul. Hebrew poetry is not in this respect defective, though our translations have so often completely ignored or disguised the formal side. We have seen already that this is largely due to the unfortunate fact that the original form has been so frequently obscured by corruption of the text. For those who would appreciate Hebrew poetry on its own terms it is of the utmost importance to remember that the psalms were not written in free verse, nor to conform themselves to the music of Anglican or Gregorian chants, after the manner of the Prayer Book version. Of course, interest in the merely formal side of liter-

ature may easily be overstressed. Overmuch attention in this direction may only invite the classic catastrophe which overtook the centipede who, trying to count its feet, fell into the ditch. But form there was from the beginning, at first the almost inevitable result of adapting the breath to a dance measure, and then more and more the result of deliberate and educated artistry. This must be kept in mind constantly, lest an effort to reconstruct the verse forms of the Psalter should appear a mere piece of labored antiquarianism out of all relation to the spiritual significance of the poems in question.

Poetry, however, uses form not as an end in itself, but for the more beautiful and effective expression of its thought content. So we turn to the question: What is the essence of Hebrew poetry from this particular point of view?

In general, we may say that the psalms offer more or less continuous illustration of three great ideas: *Beauty*, *Sublimity*, and *Spiritual Suggestiveness*. Almost any psalm would lend itself to supply illustrations of these, but it may be better, instead of grouping selected passages under these respective heads, to note the intermingling of all three ideas in particular types of psalm.

First, let us see the beautiful, the sublime, and the spiritually suggestive as reflected in what we may call the *Nature Psalms*. Poetic sympathy with, or appreciation of nature is not found so commonly in ancient literature as in that of today. Even within the pages of the Bible we come upon striking illustrations of what

seems to be a defective sense of the beautiful in the physical universe. It will be sufficient to recall the fact that St. Paul, an extensive traveller in the most picturesque region of the earth, has left us in his writings no word to show that he had ever been kindled to admiration by anything he had seen by land or sea. On the whole, the Old Testament is a better witness to the existence of an aesthetic faculty in the Hebrew race than the New. Hosea, like the Divine Galilean of a later time, was never far in thought from the beauty of flower and field or the fragrance of the cedars. The author of the book of Job was, of course, a real poet of Nature. But it is within the Psalter that we have the choicest of Nature poems in the whole range of Bible literature. In this wonderful and catholic collection, warm and throbbing with the spiritual experience of a gifted race, we find the Hebrew muse, not only uttering itself in prayer and penitence, praise and thanksgiving, but also face to face with Nature as "the living garment of God." As examples we may take such psalms as *The Song of the Sun* (19: 2-7):

"The heavens are telling the glory of 'El:

And the work of His hands the firmament shouteth.

Day unto day bubbleth forth:

And night unto night uttereth knowledge.

In all the earth their voice hath gone forth:

And their speech to the bound of the world.

"Therein for the Sun is pitched a tent:

And He, like a Bridegroom, cometh out from His curtain.

Like a hero exulteth to travel His course:

From heaven's bounds His going forth and His circuit.

Unto its bounds His going forth and His circuit:

And nothing is hid from His glow,"

Or that wonderful *Song of the Thunderstorm* (29), with its threefold description of the storm passing over the Mediterranean, over the mountains of Lebanon, and over the plains of Bashan.

Or, again, the *Psalm of the Midnight Sky* (8), with its prophetic revelation of man's true place in nature, small to insignificance amid the immensities, and yet the object of God's special care. Or the *Harvest Thanksgiving Hymn* of 65, with its praise for the produce of the fields and for the flocks upon the hills. Or, yet once again, the majestic *Hymn of Creation* (104), which has already been compared with the great hymn of Amenhotep IV to Atun.

It is perfectly certain that the psalms, restored (so far as is possible) to their original form, will provide their own best witness to the beauty, sublimity, and spiritual suggestiveness of Nature as interpreted by the Hebrew muse. Mrs. Browning's oft quoted affirmation that

"Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God"

is surely the result of familiarity with the poetry of the Hebrew rather than with that of the Greek.

These same characteristics of Hebrew poetry are to be found in the poems which emphasize the religious aspect of *history*. The Jewish theory of history, unlike that of many modern writers, is that the epic hero of the race is no other than God Himself. In the great War Odes of the Bible, such as those of Moses and Deborah, the poem is addressed to God, concerns the doings of God, and is to serve the glory of God. In

times of prosperity God is praised as the giver of all good; in time of disaster His wonders of old time are hopefully recalled. God is the leader who, riding on the Cherubim, goes before His people to settle them in the Land of Promise; He is the Shepherd of Israel who leads His people by the hand of Moses and Aaron. Thus, in such psalms as 46, and in the series from 104 to 107, with a beauty and sublimity such as arise from the thought of God moving in fire and cloud across the desert steppes, or rousing Himself for the judgment of the heathen, we have also a spiritual suggestiveness which can spring only from the sense of God's continual presence in all the episodes of Israel's story.

In earlier pages reference has been made to the fact that the psalms as a body are the outcome of national and ecclesiastical rather than individual piety. Nevertheless, there is a place in the Psalter for the *individual*, and the ritual side of religion by no means obscures the relation which exists between the soul and its God. Eastern poetry, especially in such works as the *Bhagavad Gita*, or the *Maznawi* of Jalallu'din Rumi, is rarely lacking on the devotional or mystical side. But the expression of this is nowhere so deep or so true as in the psalms. God's concern is, of course, with the nation and the Church, but even in the corporate approach of Israel through its priesthood, in some annual festival, God's relation to the individual is by no means minimized. Who can read, for example, Psalm 139 without being impressed with this fact? To quote Bishop Lowth: "In that most perfect Ode, which celebrates the im-

ments of the omnipresent Deity, and the wisdom of the Divine Artificer in forming the human body, the author uses a metaphor derived from the most subtle art of the Phrygian workman:

"When I was formed in the secret place:

When I was wrought with a needle in the depths of the earth."

The spiritual suggestiveness of poetry can go no further than in pointing out God's purpose in us in the dark ages of pre-human history, and His thought of us when "we were being fashioned in the deep places of the earth." And on the ground of this eternal purpose the psalmists build up the affirmation of such other great religious truths as the following:

1. The sense of *Sin* as a departure from the law of God. According to the rabbis, God made seven things before He made the world. The first of these was the Law; the second was Repentance, because He knew all men would sin. In many of the old Babylonian psalms we discover that sense of disharmony between the divine law and human life such as made repentance necessary, but in the case of the Babylonians the penitence was too nearly associated with magic arts of purification. In the Hebrew psalms, while ideas allied with apotropaic magic are by no means wanting, the whole process of purification has been spiritualized. Psalm 51, which describes the process under the figure of the cleansing of the leper, is one which will at once recur to memory.

2. Secondly, we have the interpretation of life's ex-

perience in the light of an *approach to God*. There is nothing more beautiful in the whole Psalter than those dramatic movements of the soul from an attitude of uttermost depression, as in a far country, in the consciousness of overwhelming present ill, towards an attitude of simplest confidence and content. The one explanation of the change—a change which involves no alteration of physical circumstance—is that the soul has won its way into the presence of God. The story of Browning's *Instans Tyrannus* is in the Psalter repeated again and again. The petitioner passes at once from péril to security by clutching in prayer the skirts of Omnipotence. For one example, out of many, the reader is referred to Psalm 6.

3. Thirdly, we are introduced in the Psalter to the pleasure of *meditating* upon the privileges assured to us by the divine favor. No doubt we have here a later use, and one which is encouraged by the procedure of the Synagogue rather than by that of the Temple ritual. But, even for the whole congregation, these gnomic psalms had their obvious value. One of these (Psalm 1) seems to have been deliberately chosen as a Foreword for the entire Psalter. And in days when, in view of the rising tide of Hellenism, it had become unfashionable to indulge in overmuch musing upon the Law, what a wonderful exercise of loyalty rather than of legality must have been the recitation of Psalm 119, with its ringing of the changes, through a long acrostic, upon the goodness of the Law of Yahweh. Lest we should suppose a similar edification altogether beyond our reach today, it is worth while recalling the comment of

Mr. A. C. Benson upon this very psalm in *The Altar Fire* (pp. 124-5):

"Best of all the psalms I love the Hundred-and-nineteenth; yet as a child what a weary thing I thought it. It was long, it was monotonous; it dwelt with a tiresome persistency, I used to think, upon dull things—laws, commandments, statutes. Now that I am older it seems to me one of the most human of all documents. It is tender, pensive, personal; other psalms are that; but Psalm 119 is intine and autobiographical. One is brought very close to a human spirit; one hears his prayers, his sighs, the dropping of his tears. Then, too, in spite of its sadness, there is a deep hopefulness and faithfulness about it, a firm belief in the ultimate triumph of what is good and true, a certainty that what is pure and beautiful is worth holding on to, whatever may happen; a nearness to God, a quiet confidence in Him. It is all in a subdued and minor key, but swelling up at intervals into a chord of ravishing sweetness."

4. Fourthly, we have our hearts uplifted to know something of the ecstasy of pure *praise*—a quite uncommon thing, even in hymn-books. Here poetry attains its loftiest heights. Like Shelley's *Skylark*, the poet here lifts our straining faculties to the open doors of heaven itself, earth well-nigh lost. No religious poetry has ever approached the great Hallel psalms of the latest Psalter in this respect. We have in such the very quintessence of man's worthiest worship, as in Psalm 150:

"O praise ye God in His sanctuary:

Praise Him in the spreading forth of His strength.

Praise Him in His acts of prowess:

Praise Him in the abundance of His greatness.

Praise Him with the blast of the horn:

Praise Him with harp and lyre.

"Praise Him with timbrel and dance:

Praise Him with strings and pipe.

Praise Him with cymbals clear-sounding:

Praise Him with cymbals deep-toned.

Let all that hath breath praise Yah:

Hallelu-yah, Hallelu-yah!"

It is no wonder that from such flame of deathless poetry have been kindled so many of the beacon-lights of song in succeeding ages. Not only does the tradition of the Psalter linger on into New Testament times to culminate in the glorious odes of the Apocalypse. Of these and other survivals we have already spoken. But all along the paths of human history from that day to this we have those whose greatest delight it was to sing the melodies of Israel. The boatmen sang them on the broad bosom of the Nile; the plowmen (says Jerome) sang them at their labor in the fields; in the churches of St. Augustine's time it was this part of the worship which never failed to secure the attention of the people. Dante's pilgrims, making their slow way up the cornices of conquered pain, sang strains caught from the choirs of Zion's temple. Some of the greatest of English poets, like Milton, sought to render the psalms into their own English verse, even though (as Cowley said) some of the translations reviled David worse than Shimei. Other poets, who were by no means professedly religious, such as Byron and Swinburne, found themselves unable, in their revolt against Hebraism, to resist the influence of the Hebrew muse. All were, sometimes in spite of themselves, lifted by the psalms to heights untrodden by the common man. Théophile Gautier, it is said, knew but a single line of Wordsworth, the line: "Spires that with silent finger point to heaven." Yet he tells us that many and many a time,

in moments of depression, when all inspiration had fled, he found himself scribbling upon his otherwise blank sheet of paper, "group after group of heavenward-pointing spires." Such has been the influence of the Psalter upon many even of those who had otherwise small admiration for Hebrew literature. What might not be possible could men be brought nearer to the psalms as they really are, and see the psalms freed from the disguise of later and less poetic time!

It is sad that, after all, so few of our hymns have caught the true spirit of the psalms. Perhaps, under the circumstances, we may be thankful that we have even a few. There is no danger that the world will forget:

"O God, our help in ages past:
Our hope for years to come!"

or

"The King of love my Shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never",

or

"All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice."

Sometimes, too, the spirit has been caught in what makes no claim to be translation, as, for instance, in the fine hymn of Newman, one in the true line of descent from the Hallel Psalms:

"Praise to the Holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise,
In all His works most wonderful,
Most sure in all His ways!"

There might have been many more hymns as great as this, had the psalms, with all their present familiarity, been a little better understood.

CHAPTER V.

THE USE OF THE PSALTER.

ONE LITTLE appreciated characteristic of the Psalter is the fact that it is a kind of vertical section of Hebrew religion from the days of the monarchy (and with remains of what is still more remote) down to the time of the Maccabean period. We have an almost continuous *resumé* of the devotional experience of Israel from the days when that experience was just differentiating itself from the religion of the surrounding heathen to the time when Hebrew devotion was ready to pour itself in full stream into the channels prepared for the universalism of Christianity.

In some of the early psalms the background of nationalism is quite distinct. Theology is still more or less in the henotheistic stage. God is Yahweh, the war-god of Sinai, who had made a covenant with them and, in order to watch over them, had removed His dwelling place to Mount Zion. The hopes of the people are centered in national preservation and national prosperity. There is no international ethics of any particular significance. Society has advanced from the tribal, but has not yet attained a sense of the universal. Many of the psalms are vindictive in their outlook upon the heathen world.

Then we come upon psalms which are manifestly confronting new issues and new problems. It is not so certain that the nation will survive the assault of the world powers. With the peril of the nation, too, comes into debate the future of the individual. The question occurs: Is secular prosperity the real test of the divine favor? So, anticipating something of the atmosphere of the book of Job, we have psalms like 73, in which a solution is sought in the sanctuary of God.

Thence we find the Psalter leading us, sometimes by sudden intuitions, sometimes by slow gradations, towards higher and more spiritual conceptions of God and life. We have now a true monotheism, in which God is recognized as Lord of all the earth. Corresponding with this comes a wider conception of society, and psalms like 100 burst out with the appeal: "O ye Gentiles!" In some quarters we have, as in 50 and 51, an apparent depreciation of animal sacrifices. In others, as in 22, we arrive at an appreciation of the serviceableness of suffering.

So the accumulated experience of Israel in history is gathered into one and set to song in an epoch-making book of praises. Let us ask ourselves in these next few paragraphs how this hymn book has been used, both under the Jewish system and our own.

In Judaism the usage of the Psalter may be considered under two separate heads: 1. *The Temple Service*; 2. *The Synagogue Service*. There is also room for reference to the Jewish use of the psalms in private devotion.

1. The evidence as to the use of the psalms in the

Temple is both *external* and *internal*. Dealing first with the external evidence, we recall such a passage as I Chr. 16: 8-36, where the priestly author, reading back from the practice of his own time to the days of David, gives us a *cento* of Pss. 105, 96, and 106. The hymn is described as rendered by an organized Temple choir and is accompanied by an orchestra consisting of psalteries, harps, cymbals, and trumpets. The people, moreover, take part in the rendering with *Praise-shouts* and *Amens*. "And all the people said, *Amen*, and praised the Lord." A passage of even greater interest is Ecclus. 50: 12ff., where, in the description of the pontificating of the High Priest Simon, son of Onias, we are told: "Then shouted the sons of Aaron, and sounded the silver trumpets, and made a great noise to be heard, for a remembrance before the Most High. The singers also sang praises with their voices, with great variety of sounds was there made sweet melody. And the people besought the Lord, the Most High, by prayer before Him that is merciful, till the solemnity of the Lord was ended, and they had finished His service. Then he went down and lifted up his hands over the whole congregation of the children of Israel, to give the blessing of the Lord with his lips and to rejoice in His Name."

Similar hints as to the use of psalmody in the Temple service, with the participation of priests, choirs, and people, may be gleaned from references in Josephus and the Talmud.

The internal evidence also is of course quite considerable. The musical instruments to be employed for

particular psalms are frequently designated. Wind instruments, stringed instruments, and instruments of percussion are all mentioned. The *N'ginoth*, or stringed instruments, seem to have been preferred for certain kinds of psalms: see Psalms 4, 6, 54, 55, 61, 67, 76, seven in all. Sometimes, however, the stringed instrument was the harp, or *kinnōr*, played with a plectrum. This instrument of ten strings is referred to in Psalms 33, 43, 49, 57, 71, 81, 92, 98, 108, 137, 147. Sometimes, again, a twelve stringed instrument, the *nebel*, was employed: see Psalms 33, 57, 71, 81, 92, 108, 144, 150; this was played with the fingers. The *N'hiloth*, or flutes, seem to have been preferred for the music of special holy-days: see Psalms 5, 53, 88, and Isaiah 30:29. The trumpet, or *shophar*, was used by the priests for the solemn announcement of certain ritual acts.

The internal evidence of the Psalter also directs attention to the function of the Precentor, or *M'natztzēah*, to whom a number of the psalms are assigned for musical arrangement. There are also references to the tunes selected for some of the psalms, such as 9, 22, 45, 56, 60, 69, and 80. Very possibly, as in the case of *'Al-Tashēth*, these references imply that the psalm is to be sung to some old, well-remembered strain which in subject matter as well as measure fits the psalm. This is quite in accordance with the practice in older Babylonian psalmody, where we encounter such titles as *The Crying Storm*, *The Bull to his Sanctuary*, and so on. Some of the Hebrew tunes doubtless had a secular origin and seem even (at least in one

case) to have been familiar as dance measures. Cf. Psalm 144: 12-14 with Isaiah 3: 18-23.

It is, of course, obvious that the rubrical directions frequently refer to the arrangements made for the musical rendering, as in Psalm 87: 7: "Singers and pipers all together."

Lastly, attention to the requirements of the musical rendering is shown by the arrangement made, through the division into strophes, for the assignment of particular parts to priests, choir, and people, according to the character of the subject matter. As a good example of this we may quote Psalm 67 in its entirety:

A Hymn at the Offering of the Firstfruits.

I. *Priest*: May God be gracious and bless us:

May the light of His face shine upon us!

(Here the fire is lighted, and the people
raise the *Praise-shout*. Note the *Selah*.)

II. *Choir*: That Thy way may be known upon earth:

Among all the nations Thy victory!

III. *People in Chorus*:

Let the peoples praise Thee, O God:

Let the peoples, all of them, praise Thee!

IV. *Choir*: Let the nations rejoice and be glad:

For Thou judgest the peoples with justice:

And dost govern the nations on earth.

(Here again the *Selah*, signal for a *Praise-shout*.)

V. *People in Chorus*:

Let the peoples praise Thee, O God:

Let the peoples, all of them, praise Thee!

VI. *Choir*: The earth hath yielded her increase:

God, even our God, hath blessed us:

All the ends of the earth shall fear.

It ought to be quite possible from such a setting to reconstruct in imagination something of the splendor and the beauty, as well as of the intense reality, of the ritual act in which the above hymn formed part.

Contrary to the general impression, it is by no means impossible to recover many of the elements of the Temple service. There were three daily services: one in the morning, of a sacrificial character; a second at noon, liturgical but non-sacrificial; and a third at evening, for the offering of the evening sacrifice. The Temple choir, which had charge of the music at these services, included not less than twelve musicians, nine of whom played the *kinnōr*, two the *nebel*, and one the cymbals. At a sacrificial service, the priests commenced with the blowing of the trumpets (*shopherim*); then they offered the sacrifice upon the altar; after this the choir sang the psalm for the day. On Sundays this was 24, and on the succeeding days 48, 82, 94, 81, 93, and on the sabbath 92. After the psalm came the joyous clash of cymbals, followed by the presentation of the drink offering. The priests then blew three blasts upon the trumpets: the first long, the second tremulous, and the third long. Immediately after the sounding of the trumpets the people prostrated themselves in worship. On sabbaths and New Moon festivals there was a somewhat more elaborate use, with Proper Psalms, after the manner of the Christian Church. Processions, torch-dances, the waving of *lulabs*, and the shouting of *Hallels* were features of these festivities and remind us of the ways in which the worship of Israel showed its affinities with the religion of primitive times. Popu-

lar singing was an invariable part of the Temple worship. The congregation, as well as the priesthood, was divided into its twenty-four courses, to keep up the sequence of the Temple services. The use of the *Pilgrim Psalter* (120-134), a collection for laypeople, will serve to illustrate the part played on such occasions by the general body of the faithful.

While the temple endured, the worship at the synagogues, or meeting-houses, scattered throughout the Jewry of Palestine and the Dispersion, synchronized more or less with the morning, noon, and evening services at the Temple. Special daily psalms seem to have been in vogue, and everybody knew the *Hallels* by heart. For feast-days there were special psalms, as, for example, 7 for the Feast of Purim, 30 for the Feast of the Dedication, 47 for the New Year, 98 for the New Moon, 104 for the Feast of Tabernacles, and 130 for the Day of Atonement.

After the destruction of Jerusalem it was natural "that with other features of the Temple worship the songs of the levites at the morning and evening sacrifices should be imitated in the synagogues" (G. F. Moore, *Judaism*, I, 296). The three services were still maintained, though the old ritual and with it the old strophical and metrical renderings was lost and forgotten. Variations were also made in the psalms commonly used. The favorites were 6, 74 (both of them of a penitential character), and 100. The *Hallels*, from 144 to 150, were also popular; the 145th psalm (for example) being used three times on the same day. More and more, however, the psalms became for the Jew

the medium of personal and private devotion, even in the synagogue recitations. All forms of the subsequent *T'phillah*, or Prayer Collection of the days of the Tannaim, and later, were much indebted to the language of the Psalter.

The Christian use of the psalms sprang quite naturally, in the case of the apostles and their immediate successors, from the Temple and the synagogue systems. It was the expectation of Israel, according to Rabbi Judah, that in the Messianic age the harps of the Temple musicians would have more strings than in the older days. How naturally the language of the psalms came to the lips of the first Christians we have already seen illustrated in the case of the apostles (Acts 4: 23), who lifted up their voices spontaneously in the words of the Psalter to celebrate their acquittal by the Jews. So completely was the Psalter the medium for the praise of the early Church that, very much later than the apostolic period, the use of the *Te Deum* was opposed rather as an innovation, since it departed from the language of the Old Testament hymn book. Soon in the Church came, under monastic auspices, the regular recitation of the whole Psalter once a week, or, later, once a month. It came dangerously near being a "saying for saying's sake," yet we doubt not that the familiar words were often well pondered in hours of meditation and became fruitful for edification.

Our modern use, as arranged for in the Book of Common Prayer, is for the regular recitation of the entire Psalter once a month. This is a following of the old monastic usage, adapted for the use of lay people.

Its advantages have been frequently set forth, and with an enthusiasm begotten of experience. The daily Psalter will often enough afford surprising examples of *sortes liturgicae*. Light will spring forth from the most unlikely sources for the devoutly disposed soul, even from psalms which the process of special selection would almost certainly reject. One has only to read Prothero's *The Psalms in Human Life* to see how many lives have been most profoundly influenced by little snatches of Hebrew song retained in memory from the daily office and transformed into amulets of spiritual significance in hours of danger and depression.

Nevertheless, the disadvantages of the cyclical system of recitation force themselves upon the attention. An unintelligent arrangement, in which much is left to chance, brings occasionally what is quite inappropriate as well as less occasionally the appropriate. Such is the use of Psalm 4, an evening hymn, for the first morning of the month. Or else we get used to the inappropriateness and acquiesce without so much as an effort to understand. Hence it has come about that men have become bromidic in public worship and cling to the least accurate of translations, almost as though the meaning of a psalm mattered not a whit so long as the language was meaninglessly musical. We are reminded of the prophet Ezekiel when he complains that the Jews received his teachings in a similar way. "Lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words and do them not" (Ezek. 33: 32).

What, it will be asked, ought we to do to insure a

use of the Psalter, both publicly and privately, such as shall be best fitted to serve the objects of religion? Several courses are open to us.

In the first place, we may continue the custom which is hallowed by long association, and trust to the venerableness of the tradition to secure us at least as much edification as was vouchsafed to our forefathers.

We may, in the next place, adopt the selective principle, advocated by John Wesley as far back as 1784, and partly adopted in the American Prayer Book.

We may, thirdly, make a conservative version, based upon the accepted text, but with the elimination of archaisms, or with the provision of a glossary for the explanation of the more unusual terms.

Or, lastly, we may attempt the very radical re-editing of the text of the Psalter which I have suggested in the following transcription, and thereafter make from the reconstructed text an entirely new translation.

It is not likely that this method will immediately commend itself. Our conservatism in such matters is all too deeply entrenched. But, meanwhile, it would be possible to take several not unimportant steps in this direction.

First, we could make our own private study of the individual psalms from the material here and elsewhere provided, so as to bring to our public use of the Psalter (in whatever translation) an understanding such as is almost out of the question, at the present time.

Secondly, it should be possible for a few psalms, in this new form (which is also the oldest) to be so se-

lected and set to fitting music by musicians who have studied their material as to recommend themselves without difficulty to the general public. Used in the place of some of our present canticles, these versions might become sufficiently popular to create the desire for a yet completer and more perfect Psalter.

A perfect Psalter, to which all the arts should contribute their very best, and in which, nevertheless, understanding should claim and take her rightful place, is a thing to dream of. Our present Psalter, with all its defects, has been the hymn book of millions upon millions of God's saints on earth; a perfect Psalter would be worthy of the songs of the redeemed in paradise.

THE PSALMS

BOOK I.

I-XLI.

Book I. really consists only of the Psalms 3-41, since 1 is a general Introduction prefixed to the final collation of the Psalter, and 2 is a special Introduction to the entire Davidic Psalter (3-41, 51-72). The latter was selected clearly because of its Messianic character.

All the remaining psalms of the collection are entitled *To David*, except 10, which is part of the acrostic 9-10, and 33, which is in all probability a later addition. Five of the psalms are associated with particular events in the life of David, of course, without any historical warrant.

PSALM I.

THE TWO WAYS.

Psalm 1 is an "orphan" psalm (*i.e.*, without a title), a circumstance explainable by the fact that it is really a Foreword, composed in the late Greek period, to serve as an introduction to the completed Psalter. The poem is gnomic and didactic rather than liturgical and consists of two nicely balanced antithetical strophes. Each begins with a half line (as is not uncommon in Babylonian poetry), followed by a pentastich in tetrameter. V. 3 (E.V.) is to be regarded as an illustrative gloss.

The Psalter is not only a Book of Praises and a Book of Prayers; it is also a Book of Wisdom. So the Sage, who represents the last of the inspired voices of Israel, has the privilege of offering the prefatory word for the finished Psalter. Impressed with the joy as well as with the moral value of religion, he presents a double portrait in which the special emphasis is laid upon the picture of the law-keeping Jew. "Look here upon this picture and on this." No Hamlet could offer a more striking antithesis than that given in the two strophes of this opening psalm.

I.

Happy the man

Who in conclave of wicked men walketh not:

In the pathway of sinners he standeth not:

In the seat of the mockers he sitteth not.

For in Yahweh's law is his pleasure:

Night and day in His law he museth.¹

II.

Not so the wicked:—

Nay, for like chaff² the wind scattereth them:

"The wicked shall not rise in the Judgment:"³

Nor sinners in th' assembly of righteous.

For Yahweh knoweth the way of the righteous:
But the way of the wicked shall perish.⁵

1. Here has been inserted a gloss of expansion:

“And he shall be like a tree planted by the water-channels:

His foliage shall not fade, and whatsoever he doeth shall succeed.”

2. Omit the Hebrew word *’asher* (*which*).
3. Omit *’al-kên* (*therefore*).
4. A late use of the word *Judgment*, referring to the doctrine of the resurrection of the righteous. Cf. Is. 26:14-19. The doctrine of a general resurrection of the dead is still later.
5. In order to give the line its full measure the verb should probably be *ta’abhôd* (*perishing, shall perish*), i.e., *shall surely perish*.

PSALM II.

THE KING MESSIAH.

Psalm 2 is another "orphan" psalm, since it constitutes the introduction to the Davidic Psalter (3-41, 51-72), as 1 serves for the introduction to the entire Psalter. It consists of four 7-lined strophes in trimeter, descriptive of the overthrow of the heathen and the triumph of the Anointed King. Strophe I tells of the plot of the heathen, kings and people uniting to set God's purpose at nought. In II the scene changes from earth's turmoil to heaven's calm and, by a bold figure, Yahweh is represented as laughing to scorn the futile rage of men. In III the Anointed King answers for himself and confirms God's promise to him of world-wide dominion. Lastly, in IV, by a beautiful use of introverted parallelism, we are brought back to earth to see the humbled nations submissive beneath the divine rule. The poem comes from a time when courage was sorely needed to maintain faith in the revival of the Davidic dynasty.

I.

Why rush together nations,
While peoples vainly murmur?
Kings of earth take stand together,
And chiefs as one consult.
Against Yahweh and¹ His Christ (they cry):
"O let us tear apart their bonds,
And cast their cords from us away!"

II.

One sitting in the heavens doth mock:—
My Lord—at them He laugheth.
Yea, in His anger to them speaketh,
And in His wrath confoundeth them.

Let me declare Yahweh's decree:²
 "Now I Myself have set My King
 On Zion, mountain of My shrine."

III.

Unto me hath Yahweh³ spoken:
 "My Son art⁴ thou:—
 This day have I begotten thee.
⁵Nations I make thy heritage:
 And for thine own the ends of earth:
 To break them with a rod of iron:
 To smash them like a potter's vessel."

IV.

And now, O kings, reflect!
 Judges of earth, be warned!
 Serve ye with reverence Yahweh:
 Rejoice ye in Him⁶ with trembling!
 Make peace⁷ lest He be angry:—
 Lest from the right⁸ way ye perish:
 For soon shall His wrath be kindled.⁹

-
1. Omit the second *'al* (*against*) as a superfluous repetition.
 2. This line is inserted from v. 7, where it is evidently out of place. The omitted *'El*, which has been variously read as *'al* and *'eth*, is plainly a copyist's error.
 3. Insert *Yahweh*, omitted by error because of its occurrence in the text of the previous line.
 4. In this line the text needs the Heb. *hāyītha* (*Thou art*), following the Gk. and II Sam. 7: 14.
 5. The phrase *Ask of Me* is omitted as a gloss. It makes the line too long and obscures the sense.

6. In this line insert *bō (in Him)*, following the Gk.
7. The text here is hopelessly corrupt. The translation given does no more than give the general sense. Suggested renderings, such as *Kiss the Son, Kiss sincerely*, go a very little way towards giving a satisfactory way out of the difficulties of the passage.
8. The word *Tsadīkah* is to be supplied, following the Gk.
9. At the end of the psalm a pious copyist has added the ejaculatory gloss: "O the happiness of all who trust in Thee."

PSALM III.

A MORNING HYMN.

The title is: *A Psalm to David*, to which is added: "When he fled from Absalom, his son." Psalm 1 is the first of the so-called Davidic psalms and one of the thirteen associated with some incident in the career of that king. The title has no historical value, but the editor felt that the emotions of the fugitive monarch are appropriately expressed in the poem.

The psalm consists of four 4-lined trimeter strophes, each of which is followed by a *Selah* or (in the case of III) a *Praise-shout* in which all the people joined. This probably marked the offering of the morning sacrifice.

The four strophes present well marked stages. I. is the almost despairing cry of one who has an eye only for the multitude of his foes. In II. the psalmist, like Abraham, looks up to heaven and beholds God, his Shield—"the whole sky for his targe." In III. this confidence is confirmed by the awakening to the joy of the morning sacrifice, acclaimed with the shout: "Arise, Yahweh; save me, O my God!" Strophe IV. sings the exultant memory of deliverance.

I.

Yahweh, how many are my foes!

Multitudes against me uprising!

Many saying concerning me:

"There is no salvation for him!"¹ (*Selah.*)

II.

And Thou—about me a Shield!

My glory, uplifting my head!

To Yahweh I cried with my voice:

From His holy hill He hath answered me.

(*Selah.*)

III.

As for me—I lay down and slept :

I awaked, for Yahweh sustained me.

I shall not fear the myriad folk,

Who against me are set round about.

(*Praise-shout*:² “*Arise, Yahweh;
save me, O my God!*”)

IV.

For all my foes hast Thou smitten:³

The teeth of the wicked hast shivered.

Yahweh, to Thee⁴ is salvation :

⁵And upon Thy people Thy blessing. (*Selah*.)

1. The words: “In God” are a gloss, destructive of the metre.
2. The *Praise-shout* at this point takes the place of the *Selah*.
3. In this line “on the cheek” is a gloss. The Gk. has *μαραίως* (*vainly*).
4. The “to Thee” is added, following the Gk. and in agreement with the metre.
5. The “and” in this line is in agreement with the Gk.

PSALM IV.

FOR THE EVENING SACRIFICE.

To the Director, on stringed instruments (Neginoth), a Psalm, to David. Psalm 4 consists either of two originally separate poems in different metres, or else of an earlier poem adapted by additions for use at the evening sacrifice. *A.* (1-2) contains two 3-lined trimeter strophes, a protest before God against the stupidity and falseness of man, with a confident appeal to the divine justice. *B.* (3-8) is arranged in three 4-lined tetrameter strophes and follows the ritual of the evening sacrifice. In Strophe I we have an appeal for preparation in reverent silence. In II we have the accompaniment of the sacrifice itself. Eyes, bowed down in penitence, are raised to watch the kindling of the altar fire. Possibly the whole congregation repeated, as a *Praise-shout*, the words: "Lift up upon us the light of Thy face." Then in III we have the thanksgiving after the sacrifice, not merely for something accepted by God, but specially for the resultant inflowing of peace and joy.

A.

I.

Answer me, God of my right, when I cry!¹
 In straitness Thou hast made room for me:
 Pity me, list to my prayer!

II.

O sons of men, how long are ye stupid?²
 Wherefore delight ye in vanity?
 Wherefore seek ye a lie? (*Selah.*)

B.

I.

Know ye that Yahweh hath shown loving-kindness:³

Yahweh hath heard when I cried unto Him.

Tremble ye—sin not—O speak

In your heart—on your bed—and be still. (*Selah.*)

II.

Offer right offerings and trust ye in Yahweh,

Since many are saying: "Who sheweth us good?"

Lift up upon us the light of Thy face!⁴

III.

Thou puttest, O Yahweh, joy in my heart,

More than when overflow their corn and their wine!

In peace forthwith will I lie down and sleep:

For Thou only in confidence makest me dwell.

1. In each line of this strophe the concluding syllable is a long *i*, giving a beautiful assonance to the tristich.
2. Note that here, following the Gk. (which has βαρυκάρδιοι, fat-hearted) we read, by the alteration of a single letter, *k'bhōday lebh* (*heavy of heart*), with *lamah*, (*wherefore*), going over to the next line, instead of *k'bhōdhi likhlimmah* (*my glory to shame*). It is a very interesting example of the manner in which reconstruction of the metre enables one to judge between the versions for the establishment of a true text.
3. Omit *lō*, to him, an unnecessary gloss.
4. Omit *Yahweh*, as making the line too long. It belongs to the next line.

PSALM V.

A MORNING PRAYER.

To the Director, on the Flutes (N'hiloth), a Psalm, to David. Psalm 5 is evidently designed for use as a dawn song. In a time of external peace, but of internal turmoil, a Levitical singer of the second Temple is preparing the material for the morning sacrifice and awaits the proper moment for the kindling of the fire. The nearness of the worshipper to his God casts a horrible light on sin as "evil", as the "boasting" of bad men, as "iniquity," "lies," "deceit," and "bloodshedding." The desire for security from all this drives him to the presence of God. "The sanctuary's gloom at least shall ward vain tongues" from the worshipper. But, in the final strophe, communion with God has its proper result in restoring the devout to fellowship with man—those who "trust" God, those who "love" God, the "righteous" over whom God spreads His covering shield. There are five 4-lined pentameter strophes, the pentameter line being, in the transcription, divided into its two parts of 3 and 2 tones respectively. The poem was handed over to the Director for arrangement with a flute accompaniment.

I.

To my words give ear, O Yahweh:
 Consider my murmuring.
O hark to the voice of my crying,
 My King and my God!
For to Thee I pray at the dawning:¹
 Thou hearest my voice.
At the dawn I make ready for Thee:
 And for Thee keep my watch.

II.

No God Thou delighting in wickedness,—
 Evil never Thy guest.
Boasters may not take their stand
 In front of Thine eyes.
Thou hatest all workers of iniquity,
 Speakers of lies.²
The men of blood and deceitfulness,
 O Yahweh, Thou hatest.

III.

And I—in Thy mercy's abundance
 I enter Thy house.
I bow down to the shrine of Thy holiness,
 In reverence of Thee.
In Thy righteousness lead me, O Yahweh,
 From the liars in wait:
Make straight before me Thy way,—
 Before Thee is my way.³

IV.

For nought in their mouth is established:
 Their heart is a ruin.
A gaping grave is their throat:
 Though in tongue they are smooth.
Condemn them, O Yahweh, my God:
 Bring to nothing their plans.
Thrust them out in their many transgressions;
 For 'gainst Thee they rebel.

V.

All who trust in Thee shall rejoice,—
 Shall for ever exult:
 Shall exult, O Yahweh, in Thee,
 Loving Thy Name.⁴
 For Thou, O Yahweh, Thyself,
 Blessest the righteous:
 As with shield⁵ overspreading Thou coverest them:
 With favor dost crown them.

1. Omit "Yahweh."
2. Omit "Thou destroyest" as a gloss, making the line too long.
3. This last line is wanting in the Masoretic text, but is suggested by the Gk.: ἐνώπιον σου τὴν δόξαν μου.
4. Omit "and cover them over."
5. *Tzinnah* is the large shield, as contrasted with *māgen*, the smaller one. Cf. 3:3.

PSALM VI.

A PENITENTIAL PRAYER.

To the Director, on stringed instruments (Neginoth), on Sheminith (probably, for the basses), a Psalm, to David. Psalm 6 is the first of the seven ecclesiastical Penitential psalms. It has been frequently associated with Jeremiah, though some have found echoes of Is. 38. In its present form it is certainly later than the time of Isaiah. The poem consists of four 5-lined trimeter strophes, and the last line of each strophe is a kind of echo of the preceding line. Strophe I is a series of "short, sharp cries" pleading for the withdrawal of the divine anger. II and III remind us of the old Babylonian psalms, both in the use of the ritual formula "How long!" and in the violence of the metaphors employed to describe sickness and grief. In Strophe IV comes a sudden gleam of light. The bass recitative, with its accompaniment of stringed instruments, touches a new note. God has heard and the psalmist's foes are being driven back. Great attention is given throughout the psalm to assonance, a majority of the lines ending in *i*, a recurrence which conveys in a peculiar degree the idea of penitential lament.

I.

O Yahweh, not in Thine anger rebuke me:
 And chasten me not in Thy heat!
 Be gracious to me¹ for I languish:
 Heal me, my bones are corrupting:
 Yea, my soul is wasting exceedingly.

II.

And Thou, O Yahweh, how long.
 Return, deliver my soul!

Save me, because of Thy kindness:
For in death nought shall mind me of Thee:
Who shall sing unto Thee in Sheol?

III.

Weary am I with my groaning:
All night I moisten my bed.
I drench my couch with my weeping:
For grief's sake mine eye is dried up:
Waxing old among all my foes.

IV.

Depart from me, workers of wickedness!
Yahweh heareth the voice of my weeping:
Heareth my cry—accepteth my prayer:
All my foes shall be shamed and dismayed:²
Shall turn back—shall be shamed in an instant.

-
1. Here, as in several subsequent lines, the "Yahweh" is a gloss and, in the interest of the metre, must be omitted.
 2. Briggs omits this line, as a gloss of expansion. He makes the pentastich by dividing the previous line.

PSALM VII.

GOD OUR REFUGE.

Shiggayon, to David, which he sang to Yahweh on the words of Cush, the Benjamite. Psalm 7 is entitled a *Shiggayon*, which is a word of quite uncertain meaning, for which the reader is referred to the *Glossary*. The association with David and "Cush, the Benjamite" is an editorial conjecture, but who is intended by "Cush" is again uncertain. Some suggest Saul, others Shimei, others some *black-hearted* tale-bearer among those mentioned in I Sam. 24:9.

The original poem, apart from the somewhat lengthy glosses (which are in another metre and suggest different backgrounds of experience), consists of two 10-lined trimeter strophes. It describes the feelings of one who flees to God as to a City of Refuge. The sequence of thought is simple. The persecuted sufferer, in appealing to God for protection, calls down upon his own head the full vengeance of the foe if he is indeed guilty of the charges laid against him. Then, in the very act of describing the preparations made to extinguish his life—like the man in Browning's *Instant Tyrannus*—he sees the collapse of the plot.

. "A pit he hath digged, yea, and he deepened it:

And into the hole thus fashioned hath fallen."

I.

My God, in Thee I seek for refuge:¹

From my pursuer² save me, rescue me;

Least, like a lion, my soul he devour,

Rending, with no one by to save!

My God, if this thing I have done,

If wickedness be within my palms,

If I my ally repaid with ill,³—

Then let the enemy pursue my soul:

Even to the earth let him tread my life:

And in the dust my glory lay.⁴

(*Selah.*)

II.

Surely he turneth and whetteth his sword:
 Treadeth his bow and maketh it ready:
 Weapons of death for him he prepareth:
 Darts of fire he maketh his arrows.
 Behold, with lawlessness he travaileth:
 Mischief conceiveth, a lie bringeth forth:
 A pit he hath digged, yea, and hath deepened it:
 And into the hole thus fashioned hath fallen.
 Upon his head returneth his wickedness:
 And on his pate his violence descendeth.⁵

-
1. In lines 1 and 5 the "Yahweh" (here omitted) was inserted in adapting the poem for later use.
 2. Omit the "all" and read "pursuer" instead of "pursuers."
 3. A copyist, wishing to express a protest against the thought of such treachery, has here inserted the line:
 "Nay, I used to rescue mine adversaries to no purpose."
 4. Here follow two long interpolations, differing both in metre and in sentiment from the original poem. The former (E. V. 6-7) refers not to the pursuit of an individual by a personal enemy but to the judgment of Yahweh upon the nations. It may have been introduced here as a *Praise-shout*:
 "Rise up, Yahweh, in Thine anger be Thou lift up!
 Against the outbursts of my foes arise!
 For me hast Thou ordered justice:
 The gathering of nations is about Thee!
 Above it to the height return:
 Let Yahweh judge the nations!"
- The second (8-11) is in still another temper, representing the appeal to Yahweh for judgment as between the faithful and the unfaithful in Israel itself:

"Judge me, Yahweh, according to my right, and according to the cleanness upon me!

Make the evil of the wicked to cease, and establish the righteous!

For the righteous God trieth the very hearts and reins.

My shield is upon God, who saveth the upright of heart:

A judge who is righteous and a God indignant day by day."

5. The last two lines of the psalm are a liturgical addition, to unify the composition and render it suitable for public worship:

"I will praise Yahweh according to His righteousness:

I will make melody to the Name of the Most High."

PSALM VIII.

UNDER THE MIDNIGHT SKY.

To the Director, on Gittith, to David. "Gittith" may refer to the mode or key to which the poem is arranged, to an instrument borrowed from the city of Gath, or to a melody used at the annual vintage festival (See *Glossary*). The psalm consists of two 7-lined trimeter strophes, enclosed within a Prologue and Epilogue, each of three trimeter lines. Very slight emendation is necessary to bring out the beautiful symmetry of the psalm.

The subject is the praise of Yahweh, the magnificent, in the earth, the heavens, and the seas. An appreciation of Nature is not as common in ancient literature as in that of today, but within the Psalter (as in the Book of Job) we have a poetic and religious appreciation of Nature which leaves nothing to be desired. Psalm 8 is conceived in a mood of reverent reflectiveness. Nature—especially in the mysterious silence of the starry sky—is a revelation of the divine presence, and of the divine regard for man, God's vicegerent. Man is the steward of the Eternal and, moreover, God *does* visit him. "He shall be My friend and walk here by My side."

I.

Prologue.

O Yahweh, our Lord,
How splendid Thy Name in all the earth!
Above the heavens hast Thou set Thy glory.¹

II.

Strophe I.

Out of the mouth of babblers and sucklings,
Because of Thy foes, Thou hast stablished
strength,
Enemy and avenger to put to silence.

When I behold the work of Thy fingers,²—
 Moon and stars which Thou orderest (I say):
 "What is man that Thou art mindful of him?
 Or the son of man that Thou visitest him?"

III.

Strophe II.

Thou hast made him but little lower than God:
 Glory and honor Thou hast set for his diadem:
 Thou makest him rule over the works of Thy
 hands.
 All things hast Thou set under his feet,—
 Small cattle, large cattle,—all of them;
 Yea, moreover, the beasts of the field,
 Birds³ and the fish of the sea.

IV.

Epilogue.

Passing over the paths of the seas,⁴
 How splendid Thy Name in all the earth,
 O Yahweh, our Lord!

-
1. The word '*asher* (*who*)' is omitted as making the line too long.
 2. Omit "Thy heavens," an explanatory gloss making the line too long.
 3. A copyist thought it necessary to conform the language to that of Gen. 1 by inserting "of the heavens" after "birds."
 4. "Passing over the paths of the seas" probably (as here transcribed) refers to Yahweh.

PSALM IX.-X.

AN ACROSTIC.

To the Director, on Mūth-labbēn, a Psalm, to David.

For the meaning of *Muth-labben* see *Glossary*. Psalms 9-10 were originally one, as still in the Gk., and as indicated by the absence of a second title in the Heb. The original is the first of the eight acrostic psalms and consisted of 22 alphabetically arranged quatrains. These are now interrupted by the *Praise-shout* of vv. 20-21 (which, moreover, breaks the *Yodh* and *Kaph* strophes). The corruption of the text extends further to the omission of the *Daleth* and *Samech* sections. The *He* strophe is recovered by an emendation of the text; the *Mem* and *Nun* strophes by a rearrangement of the Hebrew; while (following an older arrangement of the alphabet) the *Ayin* section (as in Lamentations) succeeds instead of preceding the *Pe*.

It may be felt that the studied artificiality of form detracts from the poetic value of the psalm. This is probably true, but it should be remembered that in days without books of devotion public worship was much assisted by mnemonic devices. Moreover, devotion was often disciplined with advantage by constrained recollectedness of this sort.

The poem opens with thanksgiving for past deliverances, passing into prayer for respite from the troubles brought about by malicious foes. It then proceeds in a strain of considerable depression, but hope is presently recovered in the act of worship itself. The poem closes on a note of confident expectation that God will arise and heed the prayer of the humble.

Aleph.

I will praise Yahweh¹ with all my heart:

All Thy wonders will I recount.

I will be glad and exult in Thee:

I will harp to Thy Name, O Most High.²

Beth.

When my foes are backward turned,
 Before Thy face they stumble and perish.
 Justice and right Thou hast wrought for me:
 On a throne of right Thou hast taken Thy seat.

Gimel.

Thou rebukest the heathen, destroyest the wicked:
 Thou blottest their name for ever and aye.
 The foe is become but ruins for ever:
 The towns Thou uprotest—gone is their mem-
 ory.

Daleth (wanting).

He.

Behold,³ for ever He taketh His seat:
 For justice He hath established His throne.
 Yea, in justice He judgeth the world:
 He governeth the peoples in uprightness.

Vav.

And Thou⁴ art for the oppressed a fortress:
 In seasons of affliction a fortress.
 In Thee Thy Name's lovers put their trust:
 Them that seek Thee Thou wilt not forsake.

Zayin.

Harp ye to Yahweh who dwelleth in Zion:
 Tell out His doings among the nations.
 He—their avenger of blood—remembereth them:
 He forgetteth not the complaint of the poor.

Heth.

Yahweh, be gracious, behold my affliction:⁵
 Who liftest up from the gates of death!
 So may I all Thy praises recount:
 Sing in the gates of the daughter of Zion.⁶

Teth.

Sunk are the nations in the pit they made:
 In the net they hid their foot is taken.
 Yahweh hath shown Himself, His judgment hath
 wrought:
 In their own handiwork the wicked are snared.

Yodh.

Back to Sheol shall the wicked return:
 And all the heathen unmindful of God.⁷

.....

Kaph.

For the poor are not forever forgotten:
 The needy's desire shall never perish.

.....⁸
⁹

Lamedh.

Wherefore, O Yahweh, wilt Thou stand aloof?
 Why hidest Thyself in times of straitness?
 In pride the wicked hunteth the poor:
 Let them be trapped in the traps they planned.

*Mem.*¹⁰

High are Thy judgments, far removed from him:
 As for his enemies, he doth puff at them.

He saith in his heart: "I shall never be moved:
With me is no ill from age unto age."

*Nun.*¹¹

In his pride the wicked despiseth Yahweh:
His anger (saith he) shall never o'ertake.
In all his thoughts (saith he): "There is no God."
Unhallowed¹² his ways at every turn.

Samech (wanting).

*Pe.*¹³

His mouth is full of deceit and swearing:
Mischief and malice lurk under his tongue.
In the ambush of the courts he sitteth:
In secret places he slayeth the innocent.

Ayin.

His eyes are on the watch for wretchedness:
Like a lion in his lair, he lurketh in secret.
Yea, to lay hold on the wretched he lurketh:
Seizing and dragging the wretched to his den.

Tsade.

He hunteth¹⁴ with his net and th' afflicted sinketh:
By reason of his might the wretched fall.
He saith in his heart: "God hath forgotten:
He hideth His face: He never will see."

Qoph.

Yahweh, arise! O lift up Thy hand!
Of the poor, O God, be Thou not unmindful!
Why hath the wicked held God in derision?
Said in his heart: "Thou wilt never avenge."

Resh.

Surely Thou seest the trouble and grief:
 To requite them with Thine hand Thou be-
 holdest.
 The hapless and orphan lean upon Thee:
 For Thou Thyself alone art their helper.

Shin.

Break Thou the evil and wicked man's arm!
 His badness pursue till Thou find no more!
 Yahweh is king for ever and aye:
 Out of His land all the heathen shall perish.

Tau.

So hearest Thou the sigh of the humble:
 Thou stablishest their heart: Thine ears give
 heed:
 To judge aright the oppressed and the orphan:
 Mere¹⁵ man in terror to drive from the land.

-
1. The Gk. takes the "Yahweh" as vocative and introduces the word σοι (*to Thee*).
 2. I. e. "Elyon," one of the Divine Names.
 3. To give the proper initial letter for the *He* strophe, read *Hinneh* (*Behold*).
 4. Omit "Yahweh" as a gloss, making the line too long.
 5. Omit "of them that hate me."
 6. Omit "in Thy salvation."
 7. The second part of this stanza is lacking.
 8. The second part of this stanza is lacking.
 9. Here is inserted the Praise-shout, breaking the acrostic into two equal portions for liturgical purposes. It runs as follows:

"Arise, Yahweh, let not mere man prevail!
Judge the nations before Thy face!
O Yahweh, give them a lesson:
Let the nations know they are but men."

10. Recovered by a rearrangement of the Hebrew.
11. This stanza also is recovered by a rearrangement of the Hebrew.
12. So the Gk. *βεβηλοῦνται*.
13. An older arrangement of the alphabet places *Pe* before *Ayin*.
14. The initial word is missing, but the verb supplied agrees with the sense of the Gk.
15. The word here used, *'Enosh*, suggests the sense "mere man."

PSALM XI.

A HYMN OF TRUST.

To the Director, to David. Psalm 11 is one of those designated as "guest" psalms, because they describe the experience of those who have found refuge in God. It has been associated historically with several periods, from the time of David's fugitive days to the dark days after the Restoration. The balance of favor probably lies with the age of Hezekiah, following upon the Assyrian invasion.

The poem consists of two dramatically contrasted 8-lined trimeter strophes, to which has been added a liturgical couplet. It is vivid and forceful throughout, with a fine use of assonance.

In Strophe I we have the picture of a panic-stricken earth, in which truth lies trampled in the streets and men talk of making terms with evil. But in Strophe II we see God looking down upon and judging the world at His feet. The Judgment is described in familiar O. T. language, but its chief significance is that a way has been opened to the steps of the divine throne for one who had seemingly passed beyond the power to hope.

I.

In thee,¹ O Yahweh, I trust:

Why do ye say to my soul:

"Flee to the hill like a bird?"²

For, lo, they are treading the bow:³

They are fixing their dart to the string,

To shoot in⁴ the dark the right-hearted.

The foundations are being cast down:

The righteous—what shall he do?

II.

In the shrine of His holiness Yahweh,
 Yahweh in heaven, His throne,—
 His eyes are beholding the world.⁶
 With His eyelids He trieth mankind:
 Yahweh trieth the righteous:
 And the wicked⁶ His soul doth hate.
 He raineth coals on the wicked:
 Hot wind and brimstone the lot of their cup.⁷

-
1. The line is defective. The "In Thee" is supplied, following 31:2; 71:1.
 2. The Heb. should read to be translated: "to the hill like a bird," rather than "to your hill, a bird." This agrees better with the Versions.
 3. "The wicked" is a gloss of specification which spoils the metre.
 4. The Heb. *bāmo* is archaic for *b*, like the *kāmo* of v. 3.
 5. The verb in this line requires an object and an additional tone to make the metre. The Gk. supplies the omission with *ἐς τοὺς πένητα* (*the poor*). But it seems preferable to follow the Syriac Hexapla.
 6. The words "and the lover of violence" are an amplification and spoil the metre.
 7. Here follows the liturgical couplet:
 "For the righteous Yahweh loveth:
 The upright behold His face."
 This is a late gloss, intended to give to the hymn, for congregational use, a more comforting close.

PSALM XII.

A PRAYER.

To the Director, on Sheminith, a Psalm, to David. Psalm 12 is a very symmetrical poem, arranged for bass voices, consisting of four 4-lined tetrameter strophes. A gnomic gloss has been inserted as v. 6.

The psalm is a cry for divine intervention (possibly emanating from the days of Hezekiah) against an array of babbling and malicious aliens. Each strophe marks an advance in the thought of the poem. In I we have the despondent contemplation of the situation, perilous through the clatter of godless tongues. In II comes the passionate appeal for divine interposition. In III we have Yahweh's dramatic response, with a promise that the humble, though beaten to earth, shall rise purified from the experience. And in IV is expressed the exultant conviction that God will preserve His people from the perils of a pagan environment.

I.

O Yahweh, save! The merciful are minished:
 The faithful are blotted from the sons of men.
 Vain things they speak—each man to his neighbor:
 With flattering lips, with double heart they speak.

II.

May Yahweh cut off all the flattering lips:
 Even the tongue that uttereth boastful words!
 Of them that say: "To our tongues we give might:
 Our lips are our own: who is our master?"

III.

For the spoiling of the poor, for the sighs of the humble,
 Saith Yahweh: "Now will I arise!

I will set them at peace against whom he is puffing:¹
 Though beaten to earth, seven times is he purified."

IV.

Thou, O Yahweh, wilt surely preserve him:
 From this generation wilt keep him for ever.
 Though round about the wicked walk,
 Thou from on high wilt but lightly esteem the sons
 of men.

- i. Here a gloss has been introduced for the purpose of expressing admiration of this speech of Yahweh's. The glossator exclaims:

"The words of Yahweh are pure words, silver refined."

It is an interruption of the divine word, which should properly end, though the translation has its difficulties, with the line:

"Beaten to earth, seven times shall he be purified."

This refers, of course, to the poor, not to the silver. The text is probably corrupt.

PSALM XIII.

"HOW LONG!"

To the Director, a Psalm, to David. "How long!" is an old Babylonian formula of petition which finds a place not only in the Psalter but also in the N. T. Apocalypse (6:10). In this psalm it is the opening phrase of each line of the first strophe. Psalm 13 consists of two strophes, followed (in a more hopeful mood) by a liturgical gloss. The poem favors the rhyme *ī* (represented in the transcription by the recurrent pronoun "me").

In Strophe I we have the all but despairing complaint, of an individual, of the king as representative of the nation, or of the whole suffering people. In II complaint passes into prayer, not only for health and the light of life, but also touching the remoter issue of God's supremacy among the heathen. The liturgical addition, which adapts the whole for public worship, is a thanksgiving, but whether for blessings already vouchsafed, or for blessings anticipated by faith, we cannot say. There are moments in the devout life when it is hard to distinguish between the two.

I.

How long, Yahweh, wilt Thou still be forgetting me?

How long hidest Thou Thy countenance from me?

How long shall I set sorrow in the soul of me?¹

How long shall my foe be exalted against me?

II.

Consider, answer, Yahweh, my God!

Lighten mine eyes lest I slumber in death!

Yea, lest mine enemy say: "I have mastered him":

My foes are exulting because I am moved.

(Liturgical Addition)

And I—in Thy love have I trusted:

My heart exulteth in Thy salvation.

I will sing unto Yahweh for His bounty towards me:

I will praise the Name of Yahweh, Most High."

-
1. An explanatory gloss has here been inserted: "trouble in my heart daily."
 2. This last line we owe to the Gk.: "καὶ ψαλῶ τῷ ὀνόματι κυρίου τοῦ ὑψίστου." It is also in the Vulgate and the English Prayer Book.

PSALM XIV.

GOD AND HUMAN FOLLY.

To the Director, a Psalm, to David. Psalm 14 is repeated, in the Elohist collection, as 53. The present version is probably the original. It uses the divine Name "Yahweh," whereas in 53 (which, moreover, is called a Maskil) this has been altered to "Elohim." The poem consists of five pentameter couplets, to which has been added the liturgical gloss of v. 7.

The psalm represents a nation suffering from the blatant hostility of aliens who have convinced themselves that the Jews have no God able to interpose on their behalf. To these is applied the word "fool," which refers to moral depravity rather than to intellectual defectiveness. The situation in which these arrogant despisers of God fit appropriately may be either the heyday of Assyrian power, after the capture of Samaria, or else the period following upon the restoration from captivity in Babylon.

But, as in other psalms, the thought is essentially timeless. There is the familiar contrast between an earth in which God's foes go on their way unmindful of the divine will and a heaven where God sits to survey the ignorant waywardness of men.

The prayer (and invitation to rejoice in Yahweh's Name) is added to make the psalm more suitable for public use.

I.

The fool hath said in his heart:

"There is no God!"

They have laid waste, they have acted abominably:

Well-doer there is none.

II.

Yahweh from heaven looked forth
 On the sons of man:
 To see if there be one prudent,
 One seeking for God.

III.

They are every one turned aside:
 Altogether are filthy.
 There is no well-doer—no,
 Not even one.

IV.

Have they no sense—evil-workers:
 Devouring my people?
 They are eaters of bread—
 Yet they call not on Yahweh.

V.

There did they fear a fear:¹
 For Yahweh scattered them.
 Their plan was frustrated:
 For Yahweh rejected them.²

1. Omit the gloss of expansion: "where no fear was, for God hath broken the bones of him that encampeth against thee."
2. To this is added, in a different measure, the liturgical gloss:
 "O that the salvation for Israel might come out of Zion!
 When Yahweh turneth the captivity of His people,
 Let Jacob exult, let Israel be glad."

PSALM XV.

THE GUEST OF YAHWEH.

A Psalm, to David. Psalm 15 is another "guest" psalm. It contains neither prayer nor praise, but is throughout didactic—a decalogue of duties, an ancient code transformed into a poem. In primitive times men counted off their duties on their fingers and so formed pentads of moral obligation. Here we have two pentads, descriptive of the virtues which entitle men to approach the shrine of Yahweh. (Cf. Ps. 24; Is. 33:14-16; Zech. 8:16-17.)

Some have supposed the psalm, in substance, the answer sent by the Jews to the Samaritans when the latter offered to coöperate in the rebuilding of the Temple. Others take it to be a form of self-examination for the officiating priests. It will be noted that the moral conditions mentioned all refer to man's duty to man, not man's duty to God (except as the one is bound up with the other). Also that, like the commandments of the Mosaic Decalogue, they are mostly negative.

I.

The Question.

Yahweh, who shall be guest in Thy tent?
Who shall dwell on the hill of Thy holiness?

II.

First Pentad.

He that walketh in his righteousness¹ faultless:
And speaketh truth in his heart:
Who on his neighbor hath not spied:²
Upon his friend³ hath worked no harm:
Nor on his kin hath put reproach.

III.

Second Pentad.

Who with his eyes despiseth the reprobate:
 But holdeth in honor fearers of Yahweh:
 Swear⁴eth to his friend and faileth not:
 Giveth not in usury his silver:
 Nor against the innocent taketh a bribe.

IV.

The Promise.

He who so doeth shall ne'er be cast down.

1. The *pa'al* (*doeth*) in this line is a gloss; *tsidqo* (*his righteousness*) is required for the rhyme, which throughout the strophe is *ō*.
2. The verb *ragal* (an ᾱ, λ.) in this line is rendered by the Gk. ἐδόλωσεν (*played the spy upon*).
3. By a slight alteration of the Hebrew text, the E.V. translation "his tongue" is here rendered "upon his friend."
4. The correction "to his friend," instead of "to his hurt," is supported by the Gk.

PSALM XVI.

A PSALM OF FAITH.

A Miktam, to David. This is the only *Mikdam* (see *Glossary*) in Bk. I. Why it is separated from the others we do not know. The following arrangement of the psalm is of three 8-lined tetrameter strophes. The text of v. 3 (E.V.) is corrected in accordance with the Gk., but no other serious emendation seems necessary.

Presumably Psalm 16 is early, though opinion as to date will vary according to the interpretation of Strophe III. If one sees in it only a prayer for restoration to health, the earlier date will be acceptable. In any case, the remarkable parallel between the psalm and the piece of Babylonian literature known as the prayer of "the Babylonian Job" will not escape notice. But the Hebrew psalm has an "inward sweetness" altogether lacking in the older poem.

In Strophe I the suppliant finds refuge in God and protests his faithfulness. In II he dwells upon God's accustomed favor and the splendor of his assigned inheritance. In III, even amid his pain, the sufferer expresses the hope—shared by heart, and soul, and flesh alike—of the continuance of divine grace towards one whose life seems (but for this hope) declining to the Pit.

I.

Keep me, El, for in Thee I take refuge:

I have said unto Yahweh: "Thou art my Lord:

No welfare have I save in Thee."

As for the saints who are in the land,

Yahweh in them maketh wondrous His favor.¹

But they multiply sorrows who go hurrying backward:

Their offerings, of blood, I will not pour out:

Upon my lips I take not their names.

II.

O Yahweh, my part in the land and my cup!
 Thou of my lot the disposer!
 My lines have fallen in pleasant places:
 Yea, mine is a splendid heritage.²
 I will bless Yahweh who trieth me:
 Surely, in the night my reins chasten me.
 But God I set ever before me:
 I shall not be moved with Him at my right.

III.

Therefore (in Yahweh) my heart is glad:
 Therefore (in Yahweh) my liver³ rejoiceth.
 Surely, my flesh securely shall dwell:
 For Thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol:
 Nor let Thy pious one see the Pit.
 Thou makest me know the pathway of life:
 Fulness of gladness is in Thy presence:
 At Thy right hand pleasures for ever.

-
1. Following the Gk.: τοῖς ἁγίοις, τοῖς ἐν τῇ γῇ αὐτοῦ ἐθαυμάστωσε
 παντὰ τὰ θελήματα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτοῖς.
 2. The Gk. has κρατίστη (*mighty upon me*), but the parallelism seems to favor the reading *siphrah* (*brightness*). So "a heritage of splendor."
 3. The *liver* is an ancient Babylonian *soul-seat*. Cf. the use of the liver in divination.

PSALM XVII.

A PRAYER.

A Prayer, to David. "A powerful psalm, rugged and uneven, primitive in its thought and figures, and almost crudely anthropomorphic" (Peters). It is certainly a difficult psalm to translate and to arrange, though the general plan of eight pentameter tristichs is plain. The text is here and there corrupt, but some help towards reconstruction is afforded by the Gk.

Psalm 17 is a prayer for intervention, possibly in time of siege. If originally the expression of individual need, the poem has been generalized for use on behalf of the nation. The early Persian period, after the restoration, but before the arrival at Jerusalem of Nehemiah, is a suitable date.

The psalmist proceeds by steps from the contemplation of himself to the contemplation of his enemies. Then, driven by an intermingling of fear and faith, he comes at last to the contemplation of God. The psalm ends in the expression of a hope that there may be granted the blessedness of beholding the face of God.

I.

Hear, Yahweh, the righteous:

Attend to my cry!

Give ear unto my prayer,

Not from lips of deceit!

Let my judgment proceed from Thy presence:

That mine eyes may behold it!

II.

In uprightness Thou provest my heart:

Thou visitest my reins.

Thou hast tested me, finding no crime in me:

My mouth hath not erred.

After doings of man (I walk not):
 (But) by the word of Thy lips.

III.

I on my part have kept
 From the ways of the violent.
 My steps are firm in Thy tracks:
 My feet have not slipped.
 I call unto Thee, O El:
 Because Thou hast answered me.

IV.

O incline unto me Thine ear:
 Hear Thou my speech!
 Show me Thy kindness, Who savest
 From them that assail me!
 In Thy right hand I trust: O keep me
 Like the pupil, the eye's little daughter!

V.

In the shade of Thy wings O hide me,
 From the face of the wicked!
 These, even my enemies, are spoiling me:²
 With greed they encompass me.
 They keep their heart fast shut up:
 Their mouths speak arrogantly.

VI.

(They advance):³ Yea, now they surround me:
 They fasten their eyes.
 (They purpose)⁴ to camp in the land:
 Like a lion greedy for prey.
 Yea, like a young lion lurking
 In secret places.

VII.

Arise, O Yahweh, confront him:
 Cast Thou him down!
 Deliver my soul from the wicked:
 Slay with Thy sword!
 Let them die by Thy hand, O Yahweh:—
 Die from the world!

VIII.

Let their portion be with the beasts:
 With Thy blast fill their bellies!¹
 Let their sons be sated and leave
 What remains to their seed!
 I—in righteousness let me gaze on Thy face:²
 With the sight of Thy form be satisfied!

1. Omit "in uprightness" from this line; it belongs to the next, as is clear from the Gk.
2. Or "compass me about." The text is here very uncertain.
3. Supplied to make the measure.
4. Here also a missing word is supplied for the sake of the measure.
5. Cf. the story of Marduk's victory over Tiâmat.
6. In Hebrew and Babylonian literature (as well as in other literature of the East) the idea of finding favor in the countenance of a god is common. Cf. the Tell-el-Amarna letters: "O lord, my god, my sun, what more do I seek? For ever do I seek the beautiful face of my lord, the king."

PSALM XVIII.

A HYMN OF VICTORY.

To the Director, to David the servant of Yahweh, who spake unto Yahweh the words of this song, in the day that Yahweh delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul, and he said: In II Sam. 22, where the psalm is given in what appears to be the original version, it is similarly introduced. This version has been followed in the present transcription. The poem consists of seven 14-lined strophes, each a sextet followed by a double quatrain. A few glosses which interfere with the symmetry of the poem are pointed out in the notes below.

The psalm, known as *The Song*, or *The Song of David*, is one of the few which may justly claim to have come down from the time of the early monarchy. It has exercised a very important influence on later parts of the psalter.

Strophe I contains a string of honorific titles, strikingly reminiscent of some of the Babylonian litanies. In II we have an outburst of praise for a deliverance from imminent death. In III a wonderful theophany is described in which God comes to the rescue of His servant in storm and earthquake. In IV the psalmist protests his blamelessness in the ways of God. In V and VI follows a spirited account of the psalmist's prosperity after his deliverance. Then, in Strophe VII, the poem closes with praise for the promised security and continuance of the Davidic dynasty, together with an ideal picture of the nations cringing at the feet of Israel's king.

 I.

¹My Crag, and my Fort, and my Savior:

²My God, my Rock—in Him do I trust.

My Shield, my victory's Horn, and my Tower:

My Savior—from wrong hast Thou saved me.

With songs of praise will I call upon Yahweh:
So from my foes am I saved.

For the breakers of death encompassed me:

And the torrents of Belial⁴ fell on me.

The cords of Sheol surrounded me:

The snares of death confronted me.

In my strait I cried unto Yahweh:

Yea, unto my God did I cry.

And He heard from His palace my voice:

And my cry came into His ears.

II.

Then quivered and quaked the earth:

The pillars of heaven did stagger.

They tottered because He was wroth:

There went up smoke from His nostril.

And fire from His mouth went devouring:

Coals were kindled therefrom.

The heavens He bowed and came down:

There were storm-clouds under His feet.

And He rode on the Cherub and flew:

Yea, He swooped on the wings of the wind.

And He set the darkness about Him:

A covert of darkness of waters.

Thick clouds of the skies without brightness:⁵

Coals of fire were burning before Him.

III.

Then Yahweh thundered from heaven,

And the Highest uttered His voice.⁶

Yea, He sent forth arrows and scattered them:
Lightnings He flashed and confounded them.
And the valleys of ocean were seen:
The foundations of earth were laid bare.

He sent from on high to take me:
From the many waters He drew me.
From my mighty foe He delivered me,
From my haters, since they were too strong for
me.

In the day of my trouble they met me:
But Yahweh became a stay to me:
Yea, He brought me out into the open,
And, since He was pleased with me, rescued me.

IV.

Yahweh requiteth me after my righteousness:⁷
By the cleanness of my hands He rewardeth me.
For the ways of Yahweh I kept,
And against my God I rebelled not.
Before me are all His judgments,
And I do not depart from His statutes.

So was I blameless before Him,
And I guarded myself from my sinfulness.
Yahweh requited me after my righteousness,
By my cleanness before His eyes.
With the pious Thou shewedst Thee pious:
With the blameless Thou shewedst Thee blame-
less:
With the pure Thou shewedst Thee pure:
With the crooked Thou shewedst perversity.

V.

⁸For Thou art my Lamp, O Yahweh:
My God, enlightening my darkness.
In Thee I shall break through a troop:
In my God shall leap over a wall.
He is the God—perfect His way:
A shield is He to His trusting ones.

For who is God except Yahweh?
Yea, who is a rock but our God?
The God that girt me with strength,
And made without blame my way.
Who setteth my feet like hinds' feet,
And upon my heights hath established me:
Who traineth my hands for war,
Till my arms bend a weapon of bronze.

VI.

⁹Thou broadenest beneath me my steps,
And my ankle-bones do not slip.
I pursue my foes till I catch them:
I turn not till I have destroyed them.
I smite them that no more they rise,
And they fall down under my feet.

Yea, with strength for war Thou hast girt me:
Thou humblest them that assail me.
Thou turnest the backs of my foes for me:
For my haters—I make a full end of them.
They cry for help but none saveth them:
To Yahweh, but He doth not answer them.
So, like dust of the earth, I crush them,¹⁰
Like mire in the streets I trample them.¹¹

VII.

From the strivings of people Thou rescuest me :

Thou hast set me as head of the nations.

A people I knew not shall serve me :¹²

When they hear with the ear they obey me.

Yahweh liveth, my Rock ! Be He blessed !

Yea, exalted the God of my victory !

The God who granteth me vengeance :

And bringeth down under me nations !

Yea, bringeth me forth from mine enemies :

And raiseth me from my assailants.

So I give thanks unto Yahweh :

Mid the nations I harp to Thy Name,—

Who increaseth His king's salvation :

Doeth kindness to His anointed.¹³

-
1. In the Psalter, but not in Sam., we have the introductory words: "I will love Thee, Yahweh, my Strength."
 2. In the Psalter the word is *Eli* (*my God*); in Sam. we have *Elohē* (*God of*).
 3. The Psalter omits the line, needed for the strophe, "My Savior, from violence Thou savest me."
 4. *Belial*, i.e., *Perdition*.
 5. The phrase "without brightness" is required here metrically.
 6. The Psalter here has the gloss, "hailstones and coals of fire."
 7. Briggs takes this entire strophe as consisting of two glosses. But it follows the general arrangement and is not more foreign to the thought of a theophany than the strophes which follow it. There is certainly a striking change in the language of the last four strophes.

8. The couplet, "And an humble folk Thou savest, And Thine eye bringeth down the lofty," though in both texts (with some variation), must be considered a gloss.
9. The three lines:
"And Thou gavest me the shield of Thy salvation,
And Thy right hand supported me,
And Thine answers have made me great."
are a gloss. The second of these lines is wanting in Sam.
10. The Psalter has, "Like dust before the wind."
11. The Samuel text has one word too many for the metre.
12. The text here varies. In Sam. the line, "Sons of a stranger shall bow themselves to me" comes before the line, "At the hearing of the ear they hear me." We have taken the three lines:
"Sons of a stranger shall bow down to me:
Sons of a stranger shall fade away:
They shall come trembling from their fastnesses"
as a gloss.
13. A scribe has added to the psalm the words:
"To David and to his seed for ever."

PSALM XIX.

A COMPOSITE PSALM.

To the Director, a Psalm, to David. The basis of Psalm 19 is an old hymn to the Sun-god, Shamash, possibly antedating the development of Hebrew religion to the Yahwistic stage, or (more probably) emanating from the last days of the monarchy when sun-worship was not uncommon (cf. Ezek. 8:16). The poem has been compared with the Assyrian hymn found in the Library of Ashur-bani-pal:

"Shamash, king of heaven and earth, directs all things above and below;

To quicken the dead, set the captive free, is in Shamash's hand.

· He is creator of everything in heaven and earth."

A later poet felt the need of saving the poem from misconstruction and has added the verses (7-14) in praise of the Torah. The combination makes a poem of great beauty and ethical significance. Just as the firmament without the sun is dark and meaningless, so is the human heart empty apart from the enlightening law of God.

*A. (1-6)**Hymn to the Sun.*

I.

The heavens are telling the glory of El:

And the work of His hands the firmament proclaimeth.

Day unto day bubbleth forth speech:

And night unto night uttereth knowledge.¹

In all the earth their voice goeth forth:

And their speech to the bound of the world.

II.

Therein for the Sun a tent hath been set:

Like a bridegroom He goeth forth from His canopy.

Like a hero to run on His course He exulteth:

From heaven's bound is His going forth and His
circuit:—

To their bounds His going forth and His cir-
cuit:²

And nothing is hid from His glow.

B. (7-14)

In Praise of the Law.³

I.

The Law⁴ of Yahweh is perfect:

Refreshment for the soul.

Yahweh's Testimony is faithful:

Enlarging the simple.

The Statutes of Yahweh are right:

Rejoicing the heart.

Yahweh's Commandment is purity:

Enlightening the eyes.

The Fear of Yahweh is cleanness:

Enduring for ever.

Yahweh's Judgment is truth:

Righteousness altogether.⁵

II.

Yea, Thy servant is warned by them:

Observing them is reward.

Errors who shall discern?

O clear me from hidden ones!

PSALM XX.

HYMN BEFORE BATTLE.

To the Director, a Psalm, to David. Psalm 20 is a prayer for the king who goes out to battle, but whether that king was David, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Uzziah, or another, cannot be determined. The poem is in two strophes, each consisting of five couplets and a refrain, or "Praise-shout."

Strophe I seems to have been sung by a levitical choir, or possibly by a single voice, invoking Yahweh's blessing upon the king, who is addressed in the second person. Each line in the Hebrew ends with the rhyme *kā*. At a certain point fire was applied to the sacrifice and the chorus acclaimed the act with a great shout.

In II the king is spoken of in the third person and Yahweh Himself is in the forefront. Some corruption of the text has disguised the symmetry of this strophe, though we owe to the corruption the *Domine, salvum fac regem* which has given a national anthem to more than one nation. The victory is celebrated by anticipation, since to praise God for victory is to gain assurance of victory.

I.

May Yahweh answer thee in the day of trouble:

May the Name of Jacob's God uphold thee!

May He send thee help from His holy place:

And from Zion may He sustain thee!

All thy oblations may He remember:

And be pleased with all thy burnt offerings!

(*Selah.*)¹

According to thy heart may He grant thee:

And may He fulfil all thy plans!

In thy victory we will be jubilant:²

And exult in the Name of our God.³

II.

Now (Yahweh's Name)⁴ is made known:
To His anointed Yahweh giveth victory.
From His holy heavens He answereth him:
With the saving might of His right hand.
These trust in chariots and these in horses:
But we in the Name of Yahweh, our God.
They are bowed down and fall:
But we stand and are established.
Yahweh giveth victory to the king:⁵
And answereth us in the day when we call.

-
1. The "Selah" here marks the point at which fire was applied to the altar.
 2. So according to some ancient Gk. codd. The Hebrew word is probably due to the alteration by a copyist of a single letter.
 3. The words: "Yahweh fulfil all thy requests!" which follow here may be either a Praise-shout or an editorial gloss.
 4. The text here is so corrupt that I do not venture a reconstruction with any confidence. Briggs suggests the rendering given above.
 5. The words: "to the king" belong to the first line of the refrain. A copyist has turned the verb of this refrain from a perfect to a cohortative, possibly to make the end more suitable for worship.

PSALM XXI.

HYMN AFTER VICTORY.

To the Director, a Psalm, to David. Psalm 21 is a companion piece to 20 and has the same historical setting. But 20 is for use before battle, while 21 is a thanksgiving for victory already achieved. It consists of strophe and anti-strophe, the former being sung during the offering of sacrifice and the latter after the sacrifice is offered. As in 20, the Selah marks the point at which the fire was applied. The refrain at the end of strophe and anti-strophe were probably Praise-shouts. It will be noted that, while in 20 I. is addressed to the king and II. has direct reference to Yahweh, in 21 Yahweh is addressed in I. and the king in II.

In I. Yahweh is thanked for what He has done for the king and a part of the spoil taken in battle is offered to God. In II. the royal warrior is depicted fighting single-handed against his foes, like Rameses II in the "Epic of Pentaur." The whole is concluded with a Praise-shout from the assembled congregation.

I.

Strophe.

Yahweh, in Thy strength the king doth rejoice:

And is abundantly glad¹ in Thy victory.

Thou hast given to him the desire of his heart:

And the boon of his lips Thou hast not denied. (*Selah.*)²

For Thou didst meet him with blessings of good:

Thou didst place on his head a crown of fine gold.

He asked life of Thee: Thou gavest it to him:

Length of days for ever and aye.

Great his glory because of Thy victory:
 Honor and majesty Thou layest upon him.
 Yea, blessings for ever Thou placest upon him:
 Thou makest him glad with the joy of Thy
 presence.

³Yea, the king hath trusted in Yahweh:
 Through the love of the Highest he shall
 never be moved.

II.

Antistrophe.

Thy hand shall find out all thy foes:
 Thy right hand shall find out them that hate
 thee.

Thou shalt cast them into⁴ a furnace of fire:
 In the time (when thou settest) thy face
 (against them).⁵

Yahweh shall swallow them up in His anger:
 And the fire (of His rage) shall consume them.⁶
 Their fruit from the earth thou shalt cause to
 perish:

And their seed from the sons of men.

Though they have plotted evil against thee:
 Devised deceit:—they shall not succeed.
 For Thou makest them turn the shoulder in flight:
 Thou takest aim with thy darts at their faces.

Arise, O Yahweh, in Thy strength:
 Thine exploits we will harp and sing.

1. Omit *mah* (*how*), with the Gk.
2. Signal for the *Praise-shout* at the kindling of the fire.
3. Probably sung by the Chorus, or as a *Praise-shout*.
4. Read, by a very slight change in one letter, "in" rather than "like."
5. The line is defective. For the reconstruction, see Briggs.
6. This line also is defective.

PSALM XXII.

THE PASSION PSALM.

To the Director, on Ayyeleth-hash-shahar, a Psalm, to David. For "Ayyeleth-hash-shahar" see the *Glossary*. 'The term may be translated, "The hind hunted at the dawn" and appears to refer to the subject of the psalm. Psalm 22—the Passion Psalm, *par excellence*—consisted originally of five 10-lined trimeter strophes. Later editors added the glosses, 23-26, 27-31, to render the psalm better adapted for use in public worship.

The historical setting of the psalm is quite uncertain and might refer to the sufferings of an individual such as Jeremiah or to the experience of the ideal Israel. But it is easy to "suppose that this ideal was designed to prepare the minds of the people of God for the ultimate realization of that purpose of redemption in a sufferer who first summed up in his historical experience the ideal of suffering" (Briggs).

The thought of the psalm shows a strikingly dramatic movement. In Strophe I we have the cry of the afflicted one out of the darkness of dereliction, the withdrawal of God's face, though hope returns presently in thought of the character of God and of God's past relations with Israel. In II the psalmist is thrown back upon his own weakness and knows himself rejected of man as well as forsaken by God. In III and IV we have the minuter description of his affliction at the hands of men who are like bulls, lions, and dogs in pursuit of a helpless hind. Yet in V he is brought back to life out of the very dust of death, and from this point the travail of the sufferer's soul begins to bear its fruit. In widening circles the Passion of Israel begins to tell, first upon the brethren, then on the great assembly. And the later glosses extend that influence, as was fitting, to the very ends of the earth. Out of death springs a seed which carries unto ages yet unborn the secret of redeeming love.

I.

My God,¹ my God, why forsakest Thou me?

Far from my Help² are the words of my roaring.
Daily I cry and Thou dost not answer:

Yea, in the night and I have no respite.
But Thou, O Yahweh, O Holy One:

Enthroned on the praises of Israel:
In Thee did our fathers trust:

They trusted and Thou didst save them.
Unto Thee they cried and were holpen:
They trusted in Thee and were not ashamed.

II.

But I—I am a worm and no man:

Man's reproach, the despised of the nations.
All who see me make me a mockery:

Shoot their lips out and wag with their head.
"Turn to Yahweh," say they, "Let Him save him!"
Let Him rescue, since He hath delight in him!"

But Thou—who drawedst me forth from the womb:

My trust on the breasts of my mother:
On Thee was I cast from my birth:

Thou my God from my mother's womb!

III.

Be not far from me, for there is trouble!

Be nigh, for no helper have I.
Many are the bulls which surround me:

The strong ones of Bashan encircle me.
Open wide upon me their mouths

The lions which raven and roar.

Like water I am poured out:
 Yea, all my bones are disjointed.
 My heart is become as wax,
 Melted within my breast.

IV.

My strength is dried up like a potsherd:
 And my tongue cleaveth fast to my jaws.
 In the dust of death Thou hast laid me:
 For the dogs round about have encompassed me.
 A mob of the wicked enclosed me:
 They have rent my hands and my feet.
 I can tell the tale of my bones:
 They stand looking and staring upon me.
 They divide my garments among them:
 And over my clothing cast lots.

V.

But, Yahweh, be Thou not far off:
 My Helper, O haste to mine aid!
 Deliver my life¹ from the sword:
 From the hand of the dog mine only one!²
 From the mouth of the lion O save me:
 From the bison's horns mine afflicted³ one!
 Let me tell out Thy Name to my brethren:
 In the midst of th' assembly shout to Thee!
 In the great assembly my praise is from Thee:
 My vows will I pay in Thy presence.^{4 5 6 7}

1. 'El, the ancient poetic name for God, is here used.
 2. Literally, "my Salvation."

3, 4, and 5. All names for the ideal suffering congregation.
The terms convey the sense of Israel's exceeding preciousness to God.

6. Verses 23-26 consist of 3 trimeter tristichs added by a later writer:

"Ye fearers of Yahweh, praise Him!
Pay Him honor, all ye seed of Jacob!
And all Israel's seed, stand in awe of Him!

For He spurned not the need of the needy:
Yea, from him He hid not His face:
But, when he cried to Him, He heard.

The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied:
His seekers shall shout unto Yahweh:
Saying: 'Let your heart live evermore!'"

7. The last four verses are a gloss in the form of a pentameter heptastich, declaring the future consequences of the Passion of Israel:

"All ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto Yahweh:
All tribes of the nations shall bow down before Him.
For the kingdom is Yahweh's and He 'mid the nations is ruler.

All the fat ones of earth have eaten and worshipped before Him:

They also bowed down who descend to the dust and keep not their life.

There shall serve Him a seed; to the age yet to come it is told:

To a race yet unborn His justice they tell, even what He hath done."

PSALM XXIII.

THE SHEPHERD PSALM.

A Psalm, to David. Psalm 23 is a poem in three metrically differentiated strophes and employing three different motifs. Strophe I is a quatrain in trimeter which describes Yahweh as the "Shepherd." II is a quatrain in tetrameter in which God is described as the "Guide." And III is a quatrain in pentameter in which the motif is that of the "Host."

Against the idea of unity is the abrupt change from the 3rd. person to the 2nd. in v. 4; in favor of unity is the fact that all three motifs are suggested in Strophe I.

I.

The Shepherd.

Yahweh is my Shepherd, I have no lack:
 In meads of young grass He maketh me lie:
 By waters of quiet He leadeth me:
 My life He refresheth for ever.¹

II.

The Guide.

He guideth me by tracks of righteousness for His
 own Name's sake:
 Yea, when I walk in the vale of the shadow,²
 No evil I fear, for Thou art beside me:
 Thy club and Thy staff—they are my comfort.

III.

The Host.

Thou preparest before me a table in sight of my
 foes:
 Thou anointest my head with oil: my cup over-
 floweth:

Surely, goodness and kindness pursue me all the
days of my life:
And I dwell in the house of Yahweh for fulness of
days.

1. The words "for ever" are supplied, since the line lacks one tone.
2. The Hebrew word should be pointed as *tzal-mûth* (*dense darkness*), not as *tzal-māveth* (*shadow of death*).

PSALM XXIV.

A COMPOSITE PSALM.

A Psalm, to David. The Gk. title implies that the psalm was for use on the first day of the week. In its present form Psalm 24 consists of two poems: A. (1-6) two 4-lined trimeter strophes, with a trimeter couplet as refrain; and B. (7-10) two trimeter tristichs, each with a trimeter tristich as a refrain.

The subject of A. is Man's entry into the City of God. One of the Temple choirs asks who are worthy to approach the dwelling of so lofty a God as Yahweh, and another choir responds describing the purity necessary for those who seek to enter and receive Yahweh's blessing. The *Selah* at the end marks the time for the sacrifice and for the ritual *Praise-shout*.

B. (a very ancient poem) has to do with God's entry into the City of Man. Yahweh is a militant deity for whom entrance is claimed within the portals of Jerusalem. Possibly the poem goes back to the time when David brought the Ark into the city which he had conquered from the Jebusites. See II Sam. 6: 17-19.

*A.**Man's Entry to the City of God.*

I.

Yahweh's is the earth and its fulness:

The world and the dwellers therein.

For He on the seas hath founded it:¹

And on the floods hath established it.

Who may ascend to Yahweh's hill?

Who may stand in His holy place?

II.

The clean of hands and the pure of heart:
 Who lifteth not up his soul unto vanity:²—
 He shall bear off a blessing from Yahweh:
 And judgment from his salvation's God.
 This generation is seeking Him:
 Seeking the face of the God of Jacob.³(*Selah.*)⁴

B.

God's Entry to the City of Man.

I.

Lift up, O gates, your heads!
 Yea, lift yourselves, ye age-long portals!
 So shall the King of glory enter.
 Who is this King of glory?
 Yahweh, mighty and strong!
 Yahweh, mighty in battle!

II.

Lift up, O gates, your heads!
 Yea, lift yourselves, ye age-long portals!
 So shall the King of glory enter.
 Who is this King of glory?
 Yahweh, God of Sabaoth!
 He is the King of glory. (*Selah.*)

1. Note the primitive conception of the world as based upon the cosmic ocean. Cf. Gen. 7:11 and the words of the Babylonian poem:

"The lord measured the dimensions of Apsu:
 As its counterpart he fixed a vast abode, the universe."

2. Omit the gloss: "And hath not sworn deceitfully."
3. The Gk. is here to be preferred to the Hebrew, as not involving a change of person.
4. The *Selah* marks the point at which the sacrifice was offered and the Praise-shout raised by the congregation.
Cf. II Sam. 6: 13-16.

PSALM XXV.

A LITANY.

To David. A highly artificial composition, arranged as an acrostic which, however, misses the *Vav* (as in 34) and the *Qoph*. But the *Resh* occurs twice, probably through textual corruption due to the carelessness of a scribe. The psalm is also distinguished by the use of catchwords, such as *shame, fears, way, lead, deliver*. These are generally arranged in threes. The final line is an addition or (according to Lagarde) an anagram (after the manner of the Persian Takhallus) containing the name of the author, *Pedaiah*.

The psalmist appeals to God that he may not be shamed before his foes. Then he passes to express desire for instruction in God's ways. This is followed by petitions for forgiveness and for remembrance. So prayer passes into reminiscence, since in past times God had certainly heard prayer and instructed men in His way. Reflections such as these lead, by a return almost full circle to the first thought, to earnest entreaty for deliverance from sin, from affliction, and from shame.

Aleph.

To Thee, O Yahweh, I uplift my soul:
My God, in Thee I have put my trust.¹

Beth.

In Thee I have trusted, let me not be shamed:
Let not my foes exult upon me.

Gimel.

Yea, all who trust Thee—let them not be shamed:
Let those be shamed who vilely betray.

Daleth.

Make me to know, O Yahweh, Thy ways:
Teach me, O God,² Thy paths.

He.

Lead me in Thy truth and teach me:
For Thou art my salvation's God.³

Zayin.

Remember Thy compassion, O Yahweh:
And Thy kindness, for these are for ever.

Heth.

Sins of my youth⁴ O remember not:
But after Thy kindness remember me.

Teth.

Good and upright is Yahweh:
So teacheth He sinners the way.

Yodh.

He will lead the afflicted in justice:
And will teach the afflicted His way.

Kaph.

All Yahweh's paths are kindness and truth:
Unto those who observe His covenant.⁵

Lamedh.

For Thy Name's sake, Yahweh, Thou heardest me:⁶
Thou didst pardon my guilt, which was great.

Mem.

Who is the man who feareth Yahweh:
He shall teach him the way he hath chosen.

Nun.

His soul shall dwell in abundance:
And his seed shall inherit the land.

Samech.

Yahweh's secret is for His fearers:
And His covenant for those who know Him.⁷

Ayin.

Mine eyes are ever toward Yahweh:
For He draweth my feet from the snare.

Pe.

O turn and be gracious toward me:
For I am alone and afflicted.

Tsade.

The straits of my heart O enlarge:
O bring me from out my distresses.

*(Qoph.)*⁸

O look on my need and my pain:
And forgive me all my sins.

Resh.

See my foes how many they are:
And with hate that is cruel they hate me.

Shin.

O keep my soul and deliver me:
Shame me not for I hide me in Thee.

Tau.

Let wholeness and uprightness save me:
For, Yahweh,⁹ I wait upon Thee.

(Redeem Israel,¹⁰ O Yahweh, out of all his straits.)

1. The latter part of this line—needed for the parallelism—has been omitted by the copyist.
2. The words "O God" are needed for the sake of parallelism and to complete the measure.
3. A copyist has added the words: "On Thee have I waited daily."
4. A gloss of expansion ("and my transgressions") has here been added.
5. Omit the gloss of amplification: "and His testimonies."
6. Supply the words: "Thou heardest me" and take the verb of the following line as perfect rather than imperative.
7. Cf. the Gk.
8. *Resh* is the initial of this line, probably a later substitution.
9. Supply "Yahweh" for the sake of the measure.
10. This line is probably added to furnish the name of the writer, *Pedaiah* (*Yahweh shall redeem*).

PSALM XXVI.

A PROFESSION OF PURITY.

A Psalm, to David. Psalm 26 is apparently the work of a Levite engaged in the Temple service. It was originally a simple profession of blamelessness, and so of fitness to proceed to the altar. But it has been rendered more liturgically complete by the prefix of an appeal: "Judge me, Yahweh," and by the insertion of the prayer in vv. 9-11. The original poem is in four tetrastichic strophes.

*(Judge Me, Yahweh:)*¹

I.

For I in my blamelessness walk:
 Yea, in Yahweh I trust—am not shaken.
 Yahweh hath tested and tried me:
 Tried out are my reins and my heart.

II.

For before mine eyes is Thy kindness:
 And I take my walks in Thy faithfulness.
 I do not sit with the worthless:
 And I go not in with dissemblers.

III.

I hate the concourse of the wicked:
 And sit not down with the godless.
 In cleanness I wash my hands:
 And circle Thine altar, O Yahweh.

IV.

²I love the abode of Thy house:
 Yea, the place of Thy glory's abiding.³
 My foot on the level shall stand:
 In th' assemblies I shall bless Yahweh.

1. These words are probably a liturgical gloss to make the assertion of blamelessness more suitable for the attitude of the Levitical worshipper.
2. Here follows a gloss of expansion:
 "To make heard the voice of thanksgiving:
 And to tell all Thy wonderful works."
3. Here is inserted a hexastichic gloss, in three couplets, turning the profession into a prayer:
 "Gather not with sinners my soul:
 Nor with men of blood my life:—
 In whose hands is an evil intrigue:
 And whose right hand is full of bribes.
 For I in integrity walk:
 Redeem me and pity me, Yahweh."

PSALM XXVII.

A COMPOSITE PSALM.

A Psalm, to David. The Gk. title adds: "Before he was anointed." We have here two separate poems, combined by a late editor, who has harmonized the leading idea of each in the concluding verses (13-14). A. (1-6) is a *Song of Faith—fides triumphans*—expressing the poet's confidence as light, salvation, and refuge from the foe. Some special deliverance is clearly in mind, possibly the raising of a siege. In recognition of this deliverance the psalmist will cultivate a closer fellowship with God and offer sacrifices of gratitude.

B. (7-12) is a *Prayer of Faith—fides supplex*. It comes from a different milieu, a time of disaster and humiliation. But at the close a courageous gloss serves to restore the psalm to the major key and to blend the two poems into a mingled, but not inconsistent, utterance of praise and petition.

It should be added that A. is written in two 6-lined pentameter strophes, and B. in three 4-lined trimeter strophes. In this latter poem each line ends with the rhyme "i."

A.

A Song of Faith.

I.

Yahweh, my light, yea, my salvation!

Whom shall I fear?

Yahweh, the strength of my life!

Whom shall I dread?

When the wicked drew near against me,

To eat up my flesh:

They, even my foes and mine enemies,

Stumbled and fell.

III.

In Thy way, Yahweh, instruct me:

In a level path do Thou lead me!⁷

To the lust of my foes do not yield me:⁸

For they breathe out violence against me.⁹

-
1. Here is introduced a gloss from 23:6: "all the days of my life."
 2. The reading *tzur* (*rock*) is doubtful: the parallelism would rather suggest *tzarai* (*mine adversaries*).
 3. A gloss has been added: "I will sing and make music."
 4. Here a copyist has introduced the pious exclamation: "Seek ye My face."
 5. A copyist has here substituted the word, "Thy servant" for "me" at the expense of the rhyme.
 6. Here has been introduced a gloss of expansion: "For my father and my mother forsook me, but Yahweh took me up."
 7. Note the gloss borrowed from 5:8: "because of mine adversaries."
 8. A gloss has been added: "For false witnesses rose up against me."
 9. The concluding gloss (13-14) sums up the leading ideas of the two poems:
 "I believe that I shall see the bounty of Yahweh in the land of the living:
 Wait upon Yahweh: be strong: let thy heart be brave:
 wait upon Yahweh."

Give to them after their deeds:

Like the ill of their doings:—

Like the work of their hands give Thou them:

Return them their due!⁵

III.

Blessed be Yahweh, for He hath heard

The voice of my pleading!

Yahweh, my strength and my buckler:—

My heart trusting in Him.

Yea, I am helped and my heart doth exult:

And with songs will I praise Him.

Yahweh, the strength of His folk, and the stronghold

Of His Anointed's triumphs is He.^{6 7}

1. The Yahweh is unnecessary and was introduced to explain the term, "My Rock."

2. For "Pit" see 7:18.

3. "My God" was omitted by a copyist because of its similarity to the next word 'el (*to*).

4. *Debir*, literally "the place behind."

5. A gloss from reminiscences of Is. 5:12; Jer. 24:6; 42:10; 45:4:

"Since they regard not the doings of Yahweh

And the works of His hands,

He teareth them down and buildeth them not up."

6. The *Hu* (*He*) is possibly a gloss; it makes the line too long.

7. A liturgical formula has been added to make the poem better adapted for public worship, as follows:

"Save Thy people and bless Thy heritage:

Shepherd them and lift them up for ever."

PSALM XXIX.

THE SONG OF THE THUNDERSTORM.

A Psalm, to David. The Gk. adds: "on the occasion of the solemn assembly of the Tabernacle." Psalm 29, which is beautifully symmetrical, consisting of five 4-lined tetrameter strophes, is one of the great Nature poems of the Psalter, a composition of Veda-like and elemental force. Yahweh is here the storm-god passing over sea and mountain and plain. The thunder (cf. the Seven Thunders of the Apocalypse) is His voice, as a literal-minded scribe takes pains to explain. The heralds of His majestic movements are the storm-angels, the "gods of the upper world," who remind us of the Babylonian Igigi and the Vedic Maruts.

Strophe I marks the passage of the storm-chariot over the waters of the Mediterranean; in II we follow the same over the mountains of Lebanon, shattering the cedars in its path; in III we feel it moving away eastward across the plains of Bashan.

The close of the poem is a chorus of praise from men, God's human priesthood, corresponding to the first chorus of "the sons of God." What the angels know by intuition men get to know by experience. And the end of storm is peace—peace which is itself the reward of strength.

 I.

Angel Chorus in Heaven:

Yield ye to Yahweh, ye sons of God:

Yield ye to Yahweh glory and might!

Yield ye to Yahweh the glory of His Name:

Bow down to Yahweh in the courts of
His holiness!

II.

The Seven Thunders:

I. *Over the Sea.*

The Voice of Yahweh upon the waters:¹

Yahweh upon the great waters!

The Voice of Yahweh in might:

The Voice of Yahweh in majesty!

II. *Over the Mountains:*

The Voice of Yahweh shivering the cedars:

Yea, Yahweh shivering the cedars of
Lebanon!

Yea, making Lebanon leap like a calf:

And Sirion like a son of the buffaloes!

III. *Over the Wilderness:*

The Voice of Yahweh flashing flashes of fire:

The Voice of Yahweh making the wil-
derness writhe!

Yahweh making writhe the wilderness of
Qadesh:

The Voice of Yahweh whirling about
the oaks.^{2 3}

III.

Chorus of Men on Earth:

Yahweh above the deluge seated:

Yea, Yahweh seated king for ever!

Strength to His people will Yahweh give:

Yahweh will bless His people with peace.

1. Here has been introduced the explanatory gloss:
 "The God of glory thundereth."
2. The words: "and strippeth the forests bare" are a gloss
 of expansion.
3. The words: "In His Temple shall all of them say, Glory"
 may be regarded as a rubrical direction to the people
 to join in a Praise-shout.

PSALM XXX.

DEDICATION PSALM.

A Psalm, a Song of the Dedication of the House, to David.
This title applies to the later use of the poem as adopted for the re-dedication of the Temple after its cleansing by Judas Maccabaeus. Originally, no doubt, the psalm emanates from the time of Nehemiah.

It is a very artistically and symmetrically arranged poem, in four 4-lined tetrameter strophes. Three glosses have been introduced, either as the pious ejaculations of a copyist or as Praise-shouts.

In Strophe I God is praised for having drawn up the life of His people, just as Jeremiah was drawn up from his slimy cistern pit. In II we have the beautiful description of the contrast between the momentariness of God's anger and the fulness of His love, set forth under the figure of the two guests. In III is rehearsed, as men rehearse past griefs, the vanished trouble and the prayer which proved its power to deliver from trouble. And, lastly, in IV we have described the restoration joy, with the sackcloth and garments of mourning put off to be replaced by the garb of gladness.

I.

I will extol Thee, O Yahweh, for Thou hast redeemed me:

And hast not permitted my foes over me to rejoice.¹
Out of Sheol, O Yahweh, Thou hast uplifted my soul:
From them that descend to the Pit Thou hast kept me alive.²

II.

For a moment of time is His anger, but a life-time His favor:

Tears enter at evening to lodge, but with morn cometh joy's shout.³

By Thy grace on a mountain of strength Thou hast
set me, O Yahweh:

But when Thou hast hidden Thy face then I was
confounded.

III.

Unto Thee, O Yahweh, I cried; to the Lord made my
plea:

"What profit is there in my blood, going down to
the grave?

Can dust give thanks unto Thee, or declare Thy truth?

Hear and be gracious, O Yahweh, be Thou mine
aid!"

IV.

Thou hast put off my mourning and turned it to danc-
ing for me:

Thou hast loosened my sackcloth and with glad-
ness hast girded me.

Therefore my soul shall make music to Thee, and never
be silent:

O Yahweh, my God, unto Thee forever will I give
thanks.

1. Here has been inserted the pentameter line:

"O Yahweh, my God, I cried unto Thee and Thou
healedst me."

2. Note here the gloss, in the form of a trimeter couplet:

"Make music to Yahweh, His saints:
Give thanks, in remembering His holiness!"

3. Note here the gloss, a pentameter line:

"And I—I said in mine ease—I shall never be moved."

PSALM XXXI.

A PENITENTIAL PSALM.

To the Director, a Psalm, to David. The Gk. adds: ἐκστάσεως, doubtless in reference to the ἐν τῇ ἐκστάσει μου of v. 22 (E.V.). Psalm 31 is a penitential litany, almost a mosaic of familiar words and phrases. Liturgical additions and alterations of the text make the complete recovery of the original strophic and metrical form difficult.

In its present arrangement the poem shows marked variation of feeling. Strophe I, with a piling up of honorifics reminiscent of 18, expresses trust in God, Whose intervention is represented as already a fact. In II, in a more subdued mood, the troubled soul is consigned into the hands of God, with the plea that He will grant joy and gladness. In III we have a relapse into the mood of complaint and the detailing of the griefs which have brought life down into misery. In IV this mood changes into prayer and then, in V and VI, "like a lark from a bare furrow," the soul of the psalmist soars upwards into an atmosphere of assured confidence which enables him to offer his own experience for the helping of others.

I.

In Thee, O Yahweh, I make my refuge:

Let me not for ever be shamed!

Deliver Thou me in Thy righteousness:

Incline unto me Thine ear!¹

Be unto me a rock of defence:

A house of refuge to save me!

For Thou art my crag of defence:

Therefore O lead me and guide me!²

Bring me forth from the net which they spread for me:

For thou indeed art my stronghold!

II.

To Thy hand I consign my spirit:

Thou, O Yahweh, hast ransomed me.

I hate, O God of faithfulness,

Them that serve empty idols.

But I in Yahweh have trusted:

Let me joy and be glad in Thy kindness!

Because Thou didst look on my need:

Thou knewest the straits of my soul:—

Gave me not to the hand of the foe:

But didst plant my foot in the open.

III.

Yahweh, have mercy, for I am in straits:³

Wasting away is my soul and my body.

Consumed is my life with grieving:

Yea, even my years with sighing.

My strength through my misery faileth:

And my bones are consumed through my strait-
ness.

I became a reproach to my neighbors:⁴

And a terror to them that know me.

Like a corpse out of mind and forgotten:

I became like a cast-away vessel.

IV.

For I hear the defaming of many:

The terror on every side;

While they plot together against me:—

Take counsel to have my life.

But I—upon Thee have I trusted,

Saying: Yahweh, Thou art my God.

In Thy hand are my times: O deliver me
From the hand of my haters and hunters!
Show the light of Thy face on Thy servant:
O save me, after Thy kindness!¹

V.

How great is Thy goodness, O Yahweh,
Which Thou keepest for them that fear Thee!
Which Thou doest for them that trust in Thee:
Even before the children of men!
In the cave of Thy presence Thou hidest them:
Away from the wranglings of men.
Thou treasurest them in the covert:
Afar from the strife of tongues.
Blessed be Yahweh, for wondrous His kindness
To me in a city of strength!

VI.

And I—I said in my fear:
“I am cast away from Thine eyes.”
Yet Thou heardest the voice of my plea,
When I cried, O Yahweh, to Thee.
Love Yahweh, all ye His saints:
Yahweh shall aid the faithful.
And He shall requite to the uttermost
Him that worketh in pride.
Be brave, yea, be strong in your hearts,
All ye that wait upon Yahweh!

1. The words “Speedily rescue me” are probably a gloss.

2. The words “for Thy Name’s sake” are a gloss, reminiscent of 23:3.

3. The words "mine eye in vexation" make the line too long and must be considered a gloss.
4. The "exceedingly" of v. 11 is a gloss, as are also the words: "They that saw me without fled from me."
5. A later scribe has added the imprecatory verses (17-18):
"Yahweh, let me not be shamed, for I have called
upon Thee:
Let the wicked be shamed and be silenced in Sheol;
Let the lying lips be made dumb, which speak insolently
In pride and scorn against the righteous!"

PSALM XXXII.

THE JOY OF FORGIVEN SIN.

A Psalm, to David, a Maskil. This *Maskil*, or meditative poem, consisted originally of two 5-lined strophes, emanating, in all probability, from the Persian period. To this have been added, probably as late as the time of the Maccabees, an hexameter couplet (v. 7. E.V.), a tetrameter tetrastich (8-9), and a trimeter tetrastich (10-11). The difference between these and the original poem is observable in subject and style as well as in metre.

In Strophe I we have declared the happiness of the man whose sins have been removed by the operation of divine grace. At the end of the strophe the sacrifice was offered and the *Praise-shout* raised by the congregation. In II, in a kind of retrospect, an account is given of the confession which has brought absolution and relief, together with an exhortation that others should find a like way out of their distress. By the liturgical additions the "chart of one man's path from the depths to the height" has become a hymn suitable for the praises of the great congregation.

I.

Happy is he whose guilt is removed and covered his
sin!

Happy the man to whom Yahweh transgression im-
puteth not!¹

My bones were wasted, when I kept silence, in my
roaring all the day:

For all day long, and all through the night, Thy hand
upon me was heavy:

Dried up was the sap of my life, as by the summer
sirocco. (*Selah.*)²

II.

Unto Thee I confess my sin, and my guilt I do not conceal:

For I said: "I will own unto Yahweh concerning my sins."

And Thou didst remove my guilt, and didst forgive³ mine offences.

For this let the pious man praise Thee in time of distress:⁴

When the water-floods burst out upon him, they shall not reach him.^{5 6 7}

1. The defective line: "And in whose spirit there is no guile" not only spoils the strophe, but is out of keeping with the sense. The psalmist is asserting the joy of forgiven sin, not the joy of sinlessness.

2. The *Selah* here marks the place for a *Praise-shout*. The offering was probably made at this point.

3. Here the *Selah* of the English Version is probably *sela-hatha* (*Thou didst forgive*). The copyist was misled by the *Selah* of the previous verse.

4. The two words *mitzo' raq* are probably an error for *mitzoq* (*straitness*).

5. Verse 7 is an hexameter couplet, as follows:

"Thou art my hiding-place: from trouble Thou
 guardest me:

Thou dost encompass me with shouts of deliver-
 ance."

The text of the second line is corrupt and the translation doubtful.

6. Vv. 8 and 9—the words of a teacher, not of God—form a tetrameter tetrastich, as follows:

"I will instruct thee and teach thee the way thou shalt go:

I will fasten upon thee mine eyes.

Be not like horse, or like mule, without understanding,

With bit and with bridle—his harness—to tame him."

7. Vv. 10 and 11 form a liturgical ending, a trimeter tetra-
stich, as follows:

"Many pangs are for the godless:

But who trusteth in Yahweh kindness surroundeth him.

In Yahweh be glad and exult, ye righteous:

Be jubilant, all ye upright of heart!"

PSALM XXXIII.

A SONG OF PRAISE.

An "orphan" psalm, inserted in Book I by the latest editor as a fitting pendant to 32, and indeed as an expansion of its closing couplet. The parallelism of the poem is nearly perfect and it is plain that the first and final couplets form the prologue and epilogue respectively to the whole. The intermediate quatrains have each of them a certain unity of idea. Only two couplets interfere with the general scheme and the continuity of thought. Of these v. 12 is probably a *Praise-shout* and 15 must be regarded as a gloss of expansion. Possibly these were included in the text to make the number of verses twenty-two, as in the regular acrostic. It is to be noted that the divine name "Yahweh," occurs in the first line of each quatrain except the seventh.

The sequence of thought is as follows: First God is praised because of His character, His righteousness, and His kindness. Then follows the celebration of His work as creator of heaven and earth, in verses which are reminiscent of the Babylonian cosmogony. Next is described the rule of God over the nations—that new note of universalism in religion which enters with the teaching of the deutero-Isaiah. Lastly, comes the praise of God for His special choice and guardianship of Israel.

Shout, ye righteous, to Yahweh:
To the upright a psalm is becoming.

I.

Give thanks unto Yahweh with harp:

With the ten-stringed lute make Him music.

Sing unto Him a new song:

Strike the chords well with a shout.

II.

For just is the word of Yahweh:
And all His doing is faithfulness.
He loveth justice and judgment:
The earth is full of His kindness.

III.

By Yahweh's word were the heavens made:
All their host by the breath of His mouth.
As in a flask, He storeth the sea-floods:¹
Putting the deeps in His treasures.

IV.

Let all the earth fear before Yahweh:
Stand in awe all that dwell in the world.
He doth speak and it cometh to pass:
He commandeth and it is established.

V.

Yahweh upsetteth the counsels of nations:
Maketh nought the plans of the peoples.
Yahweh's counsel is stablished for ever:
The plans of His heart are for ages.²

VI.

Out of the heavens Yahweh looked forth:
To see all the children of men.
He gazed from the place where He sitteth enthroned:
Upon all that dwell on the earth.³

VII.

No king winneth through the size of an army :
 Nor through his much strength is a warrior saved.
 Vain is the horse to bring him salvation :
 And by his great army he rescueth not.

VIII.

Lo, Yahweh's eye is on them that fear Him :
 Upon them that trust in His kindness.
 To deliver their soul from death :
 To quicken their lives in famine.

IX.

Our soul is waiting on Yahweh :
 Our help and our shield is He.
 For in Him our heart doth rejoice :
 For we trust in His holy Name.

Let Thy kindness, Yahweh, be over us :
 As we put our trust in Thee!

1. For this conception of the waters as kept in a vast store-house, see the "bit apsi" (*house of waters*) of the Babylonian cosmogony.
2. Here (v. 12) comes in the Praise-shout:
 "Happy the people whose God is Yahweh :
 The people He chose to be His inheritance!"
3. Verse 15 is, in all probability, a gloss :
 "He who fashioneth their hearts together :
 He who discerneth all their works."

PSALM XXXIV.

AN ACROSTIC

A Psalm, to David, when he changed his behavior before Abimelech, who drove him away and he departed. As to the title it seems probable that the editor was thinking of Achish (see I Sam. 21:11ff) rather than of Abimelech, though some suppose Abimelech to be a general name for the Philistian kings. The matter, of course, is of small importance since the Davidic authorship is out of the question.

The poem is an acrostic, with the Vav omitted, and with an addition which is either liturgical or an anagram (as in 25). Possibly the *Vav* was omitted to make possible the division of the psalm into three equal portions.

In this division we find a certain sequence of thought. First, we have the expression of praise because of God's answer to the prayers of His people. Next, we have the beautiful invitation to men to find in God the experience of all good things. Lastly, we have God's watchful care over Israel contrasted with the certain destruction of evil-doers.

I.*Aleph.*

I will bless Yahweh at all times:
For aye is His praise in my mouth.

Beth.

In Yahweh my soul shall make boast:
The afflicted shall hear and rejoice.

Gimel.

O magnify Yahweh with me:
And together exalt His Name.

Daleth.

Yahweh I sought and He answered me:
And from all my fears He delivered me.

He.

They looked¹ unto Him and were lightened :
And their faces were not abashed.

Zayin.

That afflicted one² cried and Yahweh heard :
And from all his straitness He saved him.

Heth.

The angel of Yahweh³ encampeth
Around His fearers and saveth them.

II.

Teth.

Taste and see that Yahweh is good :
Happy the man that trusteth Him.

Yodh.

Fear ye Yahweh, His holy ones :
For His fearers shall have no lack.

Kaph.

The lions want and go hungry :
But Yahweh's seekers lack nought that is good.

Lamedh.

O come ye, sons, hearken ye unto me :
Yahweh's fear will I teach you.

Mem.

Who is the man that hath pleasure in life :⁴
That loveth days, to see good ?

Nun.

Keep thou thy tongue from evil ;
And thy lips from speaking deceit.

Samech.

Turn from evil and do what is good :
Seek ye peace and pursue it.

III.

Ayin.

Yahweh's eyes are towards the just :
And His ears towards their prayer.

Pe.

Yahweh's face against them that do evil :
Their remembrance to cut off from the earth.

Tsade.

They cried out and Yahweh heard :
And from all their straitnesses saved them.

Qoph.

Near is Yahweh to the broken in heart :
And the crushed in spirit He saveth.

Resh.

Manifold are the ills of the just :
But from all of them Yahweh rescueth him.

Shin.

He preserveth all his bones :
Not one of them is broken.

Tau.

Evil shall slay the wicked :
And the haters of the just shall be punished.

Yahweh redeemeth the soul of His servants :
And none that trust Him shall be punished.

1. The Gk. and other versions (with some moderns) take the Verb as *Imperative* instead of *Perfect*.
2. That is, *Israel*, the afflicted nation.
3. The theophanic angel of Is. 63:9, or more probably the guardian angel of Israel, the Michael of Dan. 10:13, 21. For the idea of the verse see Gen. 32:2; II Kgs. 6:17.
4. Quoted in I Pet. 3:10-12.
5. The older order of the letters placed the *Pe* before the *Ayin*.
6. Probably a liturgical addition, or (see Psalm 25) an anagram containing the name of the author—*Pedaiah* (*Yahweh redeemeth*).

PSALM XXXV.

A NATIONAL PRAYER.

A Psalm to David. A national litany, calling upon Yahweh, in a series of strikingly expressed anthropomorphic phrases, to give victory to His people. The original psalm comes from the time of Zerubbabel and is arranged in 3 16-lined strophes, each followed by a quatrain in a more exultant mood. Two imprecatory glosses (7-8 and 26-27a) break the strophical arrangement and are probably the work of a Maccabean editor.

It is not easy to discover any real sequence in the successive strophes of so agitated a poem, but the main line of thought is as follows: Strophe I is a call to Yahweh to come speedily, armed for battle, against His people's enemies. The guardian genius of Israel (cf. 34) is invoked to drive the foe down the slippery ravine to destruction. In II we have the denunciation of the wicked and ungrateful men (or tribes) who have rewarded the Jews evil for good and have mocked at the miseries and misfortunes of the nation. In III we have a passionate prayer that God may arise in judgment against these malicious and mocking enemies.

Note that each strophe ends with a quatrain in a more exultant mood. This may have been used as a *Praise-shout* accompanying the offering of the sacrifice.

I.

Strive, Yahweh, with them that strive with me:

War against them that war with me!

Lay hold upon buckler and shield:

And rise Thou to mine aid!

Draw forth the spear and battle-axe:

To meet him that pursueth me!

Say unto me, (O Yahweh):

"Thy victory am I."

Shamed and dishonored be they
 Who are seeking my life!
 Turned back and confounded be they
 Who devise my hurt!
 Like chaff in the wind let them be:
 With Thine angel driving them!
 Slippery and dark be their way:
 And Thine angel pursuing them!¹
 And my soul shall exult in Yahweh:
 Shall rejoice in His victory.
 All my bones shall exclaim:
 "Yahweh, who is like unto Thee?"²

II.

The violent rise up as witnesses:
 Of things that I know not they ask me.
 They reward me evil for good:
 Bereavement they bring to my soul.
 Yet I, when they were sore wounded,
 Put sackcloth on for my clothing.
 I afflicted my soul with fasting:
 And my prayer was upon my breast.
 I walked as for neighbor or brother:
 As a mourner distraught I bowed down.
 But when I fell they rejoiced:
 And gathered together against me:—
 Smiting for that which I knew not:
 They tore me and did not cease.
 At my pollution they mocked:
 And gnashed upon me their teeth.³

O recover my life from their ruin:
From the lions Thine only one!
In the great congregation I'll praise Thee:
In the vast assembly shout to Thee.

III.

Let not my false foes shout over me:
My haters wink the eye causelessly!
For it is not peace that they speak:
But against the quiet of the land.
Words of deceit they devise:
And open against me their mouth.
They say: "Aha! Aha!
Surely our eye hath seen."
Thou, Yahweh, hast seen: keep not silence:
Be not far from me, O Lord!
Awake and arise to my judgment:
To my cause, my God and my Lord!
Judge me, my God, after my righteousness:
Let them not triumph against me!
Nor say in their heart: "Aha! our desire!"
Let them not say: "We have swallowed him!"
May Yahweh be magnified:
Who favoreth the peace of His servant!
Yea, my tongue shall muse of Thy justice:
All the day long of Thy praise.

1. Vv. 7-8 are an imprecatory gloss, as follows:

"Because without cause they laid for me their net:
Without cause they digged for me a pit:
Let ruin overtake them unawares:
And his net which he hath hid catch himself!
Let him fall therein to ruin."

2. Here is inserted a gloss of expansion, as follows:
"Delivering the afflicted from him too strong for him:
The poor and needy from his spoiler."
3. An exclamatory gloss has here been interpolated by a copyist:
"Lord, how long wilt Thou look upon it?"
4. Here has been inserted a Maccabean gloss, taken, for the most part, from 70: 3-5, as follows:
"Let them be ashamed and confounded together,
That rejoice at my ill!
Let them be clothed with shame and disgrace,
Who magnify themselves against me!
Let those shout and be joyful,
Who favor my righteousness!
Let them say evermore:"

PSALM XXXVI.

A COMPOSITE PSALM.

To the Director, a Psalm, to David, the servant of Yahweh. Psalm 36 is the combination of two poems, somewhat after the manner of 19. An editor has added some lines for the purpose of making a suitable liaison. As the psalm stands, the contrast between "the gnarled obscurity" of A. (1-4) and the "limpid flow" of B. (5-9) is very striking.

The former poem (or fragment) depicts sin as playing the part of the oracle out of the dark cavern of the sinner's heart. In B. a fitting foil to so awful a picture is found in the expanse and range of Nature's witness to the four attributes of God: Kindness, Faithfulness, Righteousness, and Judgment. The editor links the two pieces together by the addition of a prayer that the kindness and justice of God may be extended to those who know Him and that the wicked man of the first poem may have no power to hurt.

A.

An Oracle Concerning the Wicked Man.

Oracle¹ of the wicked man's sin in the midst of his heart:

"There is no fear of God before his eyes:
For he flattereth himself² in his eyes,
That his sin shall not be found out.
The words of his mouth are vanity and deceit:
He hath ceased to do wisely and well:
Vanity on his bed he deviseth:
He hath taken a way that is bad:
Evil he doth not abhor."

*B.**God in Nature.**I.*

Yahweh—in Heaven Thy Kindness:
 Thy Faithfulness unto the Skies:
 Like the Mountains of God Thy Justice:
 Thy Judgments the vast Abyss:
 Man and cattle Thou savest.³

II.

Yahweh—how precious Thy Kindness!⁴
 They are filled with the fat of Thy house:
 Thou givest drink from the stream of Thy dainties:
 For with Thee is the fountain of life:
 And in Thy light we shall see light.

Liturgical Close.

Extend Thou Thy kindness to them that know Thee:
 And Thy justice to the upright of heart!
 Let not the foot of pride come against me:
 Nor the hand of the godless remove me!

.

There have they fallen, the workers of vanity:⁵
 Are thrust down and unable to stand.

1. The word translated "oracle" is that commonly used for the utterance of a prophet. Cf. Num. 24: 3, 4, 6.
2. Peters takes the world *'Elaiw* as "his god" rather than "to him," and translates "smootheeth his god."

3. The "Yahweh" here makes the line too long. It belongs properly to the next line and strophe, where the *'Elohim* is unnecessary and improbable.
4. Here has been interpolated a tetrameter line:
"And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Thy wings."
It is reminiscent of 57:2.
5. Probably a later Maccabean comment on the preceding.

PSALM XXXVII.

TRUST IN YAHWEH.

A Psalm, to David. Psalm 37 is a didactic acrostic, without much that is original, arranged so as to be memorized for encouragement in times of distress. The acrostic is incomplete in the *Daleth*, *Kaph*, and *Qoph* quatrains; *Tau* is too long; and glosses have been inserted in *Heth* and *Nun*. Small reconstructions, moreover, are needed here and there (as in *Ayin*). It has seemed best to leave the defective stanzas as they stand in the text.

The poem comes from a time much like that which produced "Job," but is less advanced philosophically. The psalmist is not seeking to solve problems but to emphasize his faith. His experience has hitherto been that of v. 25: "I have been young and now am old, etc."—a position impossible to the author of "Job." Continuity of thought, of course, is not to be expected in an acrostic, but the main ideas are two. First, that the prosperity of the wicked is but temporary—"like unto grass they shall speedily wither." And, secondly, that the godly may safely repose in the shelter of the Divine Providence. To "roll upon God" one's care is to find peace.

Aleph.

Fret not thyself as to the wicked:

Distress not thyself with the doers of evil.

For like unto grass they shall speedily wither:

Yea, like the green herbage, shall fade away.

Beth.

In Yahweh trust and be doing good:

Live in the land and pasture securely.

Delight thyself upon Yahweh:

So will He give thee thy heart's requests.

Gimel.

Roll upon Yahweh thy way:
 Trust Him and He will do it.
 Like light He shall bring forth thy justice:
 Like the glory of noon-day thy judgment.

Daleth.

Be silent to Yahweh and wait upon Him:
¹
 Fret not at him whose way is succeeding:
 Nor at him that performeth evil devices.

He.

Desist from anger and passion dismiss:
 Fret not, for surely it worketh but ill.
 For the evil-doers shall be cut off:
 But waiters on Yahweh—these shall inherit the
 land.

Vav.

Yea, yet a little and no more is the wicked:
 Thou seekest his place and it is no more.
 But the meek shall inherit the land:
 And delight in abundance of peace.

Zayin.

The wicked plotteth against the righteous:
 And gnasheth upon him his teeth.
 The Lord at him doth laugh:
 For He seeth his day is coming.

Heth.

The wicked have drawn out the sword:
 Yea, they are treading the bow.^{2 3}
 Their sword shall go through their heart:
 And their bows shall be shivered to pieces.

Teth.

Of the righteous better the little
 Than the plenty of many wicked.
 For the arms of the wicked are shivered:
 But Yahweh upholdeth the righteous.

Yodh.

Yahweh knoweth the days of the perfect:
 And their portion shall be for ever.
 In the evil time they shall not be shamed:
 And in famine time shall be satisfied.

Kaph.

For the wicked shall perish (for ever):⁴

 And the foes of Yahweh, like fat of lambs,
 Shall vanish—in smoke shall vanish.

Lamedh.

The wicked borroweth and payeth not:
 But the just showeth mercy and giveth.
 For those whom He blesseth inherit the land:
 And those whom He curseth shall perish.

Mem.

Man's steps are established of Yahweh:
 And He taketh delight in his way.
 For he falleth, yet is not cast down:
 And Yahweh upholdeth his hand.

Nun.

I was a youth, but now am I aged:
 And I see not the righteous forsaken.⁵
 All day he is merciful and lendeth:
 And his seed shall be for a blessing.

Samech.

Turn from evil and do what is good:
And dwell (in the land) for ever.
For Yahweh delighteth in judgment:
And will not forsake His pious ones.

Ayin.

(The lowly)⁶ are kept for ever:
But the seed of the wicked cut off.
The just shall inherit the land:
And shall dwell upon it for ever.

Pe.

The mouth of the just museth wisdom:
And his tongue will be talking of judgment.
In his heart is the law of his God:
His footsteps shall not slip.

Tsade.

The wicked lay wait for the righteous:
And seek to put him to death.
But not in his hand Yahweh leaveth him:
Nor convicteth him when he is judged.

Qoph.

Wait upon Yahweh and keep His way:

7

To possess the land He will lift thee up:
When the wicked is cut off thou shalt see it.

Resh.

I have seen the wicked in power:
 Flourishing like a luxuriant tree.
 Then I passed by and lo, there was none of him:
 I sought him but he could not be found.

Shin.

Observe the perfect and behold the upright:
 For the man of peace shall have offspring.
 But transgressors shall perish altogether:
 The offspring of sinners destroyed.

Tau.

From Yahweh is the salvation of the righteous:
 A refuge in time of distress.
 Yea, Yahweh shall help and save from the wicked:
 And, because they trust Him, deliver them.

1. The stanza is defective.
2. Omit the gloss: "To cast down the poor and needy, to slay the upright of life."
3. For the expression "treading the bow," cf. J. M. McPhail's *Açoka*: "In using the bow they rested one end on the ground and pressed it with the left foot as they drew the string backwards, discharging the arrow" (p. 24).
4. The stanza is defective, but the word *l'olām* (*for ever*) should be supplied in line 1.
5. Omit the gloss: "nor his seed begging their bread."
6. I have ventured to supply as the first word *'anavim* (*the lowly*), but Briggs suggests *'olim* (*the unjust*), dropped by the copyist because of its likeness to *'olam*.
7. The stanza is defective.

PSALM XXXVIII.

A PSALM OF COMPLAINT.

A Psalm, to David, to Bring to Remembrance. According to the title (for which see *Glossary*) Psalm 38 was used for the *Azkarah*, or Memorial Offering. The Gk. adds that it was the *Sabbath Azkarah*. The psalm is difficult to arrange strophically and the following transcription is not in all respects satisfactory. Briggs takes the first five verses as a late penitential gloss, but it has seemed best to retain the psalm much as it has come down to us, especially as it is familiar as one of the Seven Penitential Psalms.

The psalm is probably a lamentation from the age of Nehemiah. The things complained of, however, are general—suffering of body and soul, desertion by friends, enemies who seek the ruin of the afflicted. The poem ends with an appeal to Yahweh to hasten to the rescue.

I.

Yahweh, not in Thine anger rebuke me:

Nor in Thy wrath chastise me!

For Thine arrows have entered into me:

And Thy hand presseth me down.

There is no health in my flesh:

Because of Thine anger.

There is no soundness in my bones:

Because of my sin.

My guilt hath gone over my head:

Like a burden too heavy for me.

My wounds are noisome and fester:

Because of my folly.

II.

I stagger—am bowed down exceedingly:
All the day I go mourning.
For my loins are filled with contempt:
In my flesh is no health.
I am numbed and exceedingly crushed:
I roar for my heart's disquiet.¹
Lord, with Thee is all my desire:
And my groaning from Thee is not hid.
My heart faileth, my strength forsaketh me:
My eye-sight—even this is no more.
My lovers and friends stand aloof from my plague:
Yea, my neighbors stand far away.

III.

They that search for my life lay snares:
They that seek for my hurt speak guile.
And I—like a deaf man—I hear not:
Like the dumb, whose mouth doth not open.
Yea, I am like a man who heareth not:
In whose mouth are no arguments.
For in Thee, O Yahweh, I hope:
Thou shalt answer, O Lord, my God!²
Lest mine enemies over me triumph:
Boast over me, when my foot slippeth.
For I was ready to halt:
And my pain was before me continually.

IV.

For I do confess my guilt:
For my sin I am sorry.
Since my foes without cause³ are mighty:
And they who hate me falsely are many.

And they who pay back my good with ill,

When I follow the good, oppose me.

Forsake me not, O Yahweh:

Be not distant from me, my God!

Hasten Thou to mine aid:

O my salvation's Lord!

1. By the alteration of a single Hebrew letter, Briggs reads "lion" instead of "my heart" and translates: "I growl with the growling of a lion."
2. Omit "For I said." This is evidently a parenthetical gloss.
3. Read *hinnām* (*without cause*) instead of *hayyim* (*alive*).

PSALM XXXIX.

AN ELEGY.

To the Director, to Jeduthun, a Psalm, to David. For the term "Jeduthun" see the *Glossary*. Psalm 39 consists of two strophes in the elegiac measure, each strophe ending in a refrain. To this have been added (1) a Prayer (v. 12a) and a further gloss (12b-13) by a later editor.

The psalm begins with a reference to that schooling in silence which attracted the attention of the Benedictines and furnishes the material for the story of Pambo. Nevertheless, "locked lips make hearts hotter" and the unnatural restraint is at last broken. The words that follow, however, are rather sad and resigned, the outcome of a struggle which has lost its first impatience. The second strophe continues to dwell on the transitoriness of life, but the pessimism is shot with hope, as the evening clouds by the rays of a declining sun. The hope is not precisely stated, but its substance is: "My trust is in Thee."

Liturgical additions make of the psalm a prayer and there is great beauty in the reference to three kinds of prayer; namely, Prayer, Crying, and Weeping. "Prayer is made in silence, Crying with a loud voice, but Tears surpass all."

I.

I said: I will look to my ways:

Lest I sin with my lips.

I will put to my mouth a muzzle:

While the wicked is in my presence.

I was dumb and kept silence from good:

Though sore was my pain.

Hot within was my heart in my musing:

Smouldered the fire.

Then I spake with my tongue: Let me know,
 O Yahweh, mine end!
 And the tale of my days, what it is, let me know:
 And what is its close!
 Lo, but spans for my days hast Thou given:
 And my life is as nothing.¹
 Truly is every man vanity.² (*Selah.*)

II.

Surely, as a shadow man walketh:
 Surely, like vapor he striveth.
 He heapeth up (riches) and knoweth not
 Who shall receive them.
 And now, Lord, what do I wait for?
 My hope is in Thee.
 From all mine offences deliver me: make me not
 A scorn to the foolish.
 I was dumb; my mouth have I opened not:
 Because Thou hast done it.
 Remove from off me Thy chastisement:
 Lest I come to an end.
 With correction for sin wouldst Thou punish man:
 Like a moth is his beauty consumed.
 Truly is every man vanity. (*Selah.*)^{3 4}

-
1. The "before Thee" of v. 5 (E.V.) makes the line too long and is to be regarded as a gloss.
2. Such is the form of the refrain after Strophe II. The *nitstabh* of v. 5 is probably a gloss. It is in any case difficult to translate. An alternative would be (with Briggs) to put the *neg'dkâ* (*before Thee*) of 5a with the refrain after Strophe I and conform the

second refrain to this, as follows: "In Thy sight surely
altogether vapor doth every man stand."

3. Here follows a liturgical addition:

"Hear my prayer, O Yahweh:
And give ear unto my cry:
Be not silent to my tears."

4. A still later editor has added the following trimeter
tetrastich:

"For a stranger am I with Thee:
A sojourner like all my fathers.
Look away from me that I may rejoice:
Ere I depart and be no more."

PSALM XL.

A COMPOSITE PSALM.

To the Director, a Psalm, to David. This composite poem consists of A. (1-11 E.V.), a *Hymn of Thanksgiving*, and B. (13-17) a *Prayer for Deliverance*, which also appears in Book II as Psalm 70. V. 12 forms a connecting link. Both poems belong to the same period, probably that which followed the return from the Captivity.

In A. the psalmist speaks of the long patience which has been rewarded by deliverance and expresses his gratitude in song. What is the true recompense to be given to Yahweh for His goodness? It is not enough to offer the four kinds of sacrifices; the self-dedication of which all sacrifice was the type is God's desire.

In B., in familiar phrases, the psalmist voices his appeal to God to save him from his enemies and so give occasion for men to rejoice in Yahweh and acknowledge His power.

A.

A Thanksgiving.

I.

Waiting, I waited on Yahweh, and He inclined unto
me:

And He brought me out of destruction's Pit, from
the miry swamp:

And He placed my feet on a crag, making firm my
steps:

And put a new song in my mouth, a psalm to our
God.

Many shall see and fear, and in Yahweh shall put
their trust.

II.

Happy the man who hath placed in Yahweh his trust:
 And turned not aside to vain gods, to inciters of
 falsehood.
 Many the things Thou hast done, O Yahweh, our
 God!
 Thy wonders and purposes usward: there is none to
 compare.¹
 Should I declare them and tell them, too many to
 number are they.

III.

“Sacrifice and oblation Thou favorest not: mine ears
 hast Thou opened:
 Burnt and sin-offerings Thou askest not: I said:
 Lo, I come!
 In the roll of the book it is written that I accom-
 plish Thy will:
 O my God, in Thy law I find pleasure in the midst
 of my heart:
 In the great congregation Thy justice I preach: be-
 hold Thou my lips.

IV.

I am not withholding, O Yahweh, Thou knowest, Thy
 justice:
 In the midst of my heart Thy truth and salvation
 I hide not.
 I say, from the great congregation I hide not Thy
 kindness and truth.

Therefore, O Yahweh, withhold not Thy compassion from me:

Let Thy kindness, yea, and Thy truth for evermore keep me.³

*B.*⁴

A Prayer for Deliverance.

I.

Be pleased, Yahweh, to save me:

Yahweh, haste to my help!

Let them be ashamed and confounded,

Who are seeking after my life!⁵

Let them be turned back and dishonored,

Who in my distress take delight!

Let them, in reward for my shame, be confounded,

Who unto me say: "Ha! Ha!"

II.

But let them be glad and rejoice in Thee,

All who after Thee seek!

Let them say ever: "Yahweh is great!"

Who love Thy salvation!

And I—since I am needy and poor—

Haste, my Lord, unto me!

My help and deliverance art Thou:

Delay not, my God!

-
1. The "unto Thee" in Strophe II 4 is not in the Gk. and makes the line too long.
 2. The arrangement of the lines in Strophe III is, it will be noticed, different from that in the Hebrew text.

The changes made are, in general, required by the metre.

3. Here is inserted the liturgical gloss which connects A. and B. It will be noted that it is quite out of tune with the thought of the preceding poem:
"For evils surrounded me till they overpassed number:
Mine iniquities overwhelmed me till I could not see:
They outnumbered the hairs of my head till my courage
forsook me."
4. B. occurs as a separate psalm in Book II, where it is Psalm 70. There it has been changed by the substitution of the sacred Name *'Elohim* for *Yahweh*.
5. Here has been added a gloss: "to snatch it." This does not occur in Psalm 70.

PSALM XLI.

A PRAYER IN SICKNESS.

To the Director, a Psalm, to David. A poem in four well-marked 5-lined tetrameter strophes, only broken by the interpolation of three or four brief glosses.

Like the Introductory Psalm, the closing poem of Book I commences with the word "Happy." In this case, however, the psalm is not didactic, but a true prayer, though it is hard for the psalmist to repress the sense of malignant foes pressing about him. Traditionally the psalm has been associated with the revolt of Ahithophel against David (I Sam. 15-17), and in the Gospels it is quoted as having been prophetic of the treason of Judas. But, unfortunately, treason of this sort is not unique (cf. the striking illustration in the Egyptian "Instructions of Amenemhet") and the historical occasion is more probably to be found in the opposition of men like Sanballat to the rebuilding of Jerusalem. In the final strophe confidence is reëstablished—the confidence that, though men may oppose, God will hold fast His own and set them before His face for ever.

I.

Happy is he who considereth the poor!

In the day of evil may Yahweh deliver him!

May Yahweh preserve him and keep him alive!

May He not yield him to the lust of his foes!

May Yahweh support him on the bed of his sickness!²

II.

Mine enemies say it is evil with me:

"How long ere he die and his name pass away?"

If he enter to see me, he uttereth falsehood.

His heart collecteth mischief about him:

Then he goeth abroad and spreadeth it.

III.

All who hate me mutter together of me:

Over me they devise evil against me:

"Be a thing of Belial poured out upon him!

When he lieth down let him rise up no more!"

So the man who vowed peace³ with me tripped me
up heavily.⁴

IV.

But Thou, Yahweh, pity me, and lift Thou me up!⁵

By this shall I know Thou delightest in me.

For so shall my foes not over me shout.

And I—in my blamelessness Thou shalt hold me
secure:

And shalt set me for ever before Thy face.

1. Here has been inserted a gloss of expansion: "And make him happy in the land."

2. The gloss has been omitted:

"And all his bed hast Thou changed in his sickness.

And I—I said: 'Yahweh, pity me!'

Heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee!"

3. Another gloss of expansion must here be omitted:

"In whom I trusted, who ate of my bread."

4. Peters translates: "made great magic against me."

5. An ejaculation of vengeance has here been interpolated:
"Let me be avenged on them!"

Doxology to Book I.

Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Israel,

From everlasting to everlasting.

Amen and Amen.

BOOK II.

XLII-LXXII.

THE ORIGINAL Book II was, in all probability, Pss. 51 to 73, a second collection of poems ascribed to David, which it was intended to add to the first collection (2-41). But between these two Davidic hymn-books have been inserted the Korahitic psalms, 42-49, and also one psalm of the Asaphic collection which is continued from 73. It was probably separated from its companions by pure accident.

The Davidic psalms of Book II, moreover, show some trace of gradual compilation. First, we have a series of penitential poems (51-64); next follow three hymns (65-67) of a joyous and festal character; 68 is a magnificent hymn of triumph which, though ascribed to David, stands by itself; 69 is composite and returns to the penitential mood; 70 is an Elohist version of 40; 71 is only assigned to David in the Greek; and 72 is a Messianic hymn designed as a close of the Davidic Psalter just as 2 was designed to be its introduction. The rubric: "The Prayers of David, the Son of Jesse, are ended," shows that the collection was considered closed.

The Korahitic psalms, 42-49, are part of a collec-

tion, emanating from one of the Levitical guilds, and compiled in the early part of the Greek period. They are "highly artistic in form" and "highly poetic in content." Indeed, they contain some of the very finest poems of the entire Psalter.

It should be noted also that, of the psalms of Book II, five are entitled *Miktams*, or "Golden pieces," belonging probably to the poetry of the early Persian period, and eight are *Maskils*, or Meditations, belonging to the later Persian period.

All the psalms of this book are Elohistie, some of them (such as 53 and 70) showing signs of having been specially edited with a view to substituting the Divine Name *Elohim* for the too nationalistic *Yahweh*.

PSALM XLII-XLIII.

AN EXILE'S LONGING.

For the Director, a Maskil, to the sons of Korah. Psalms 42 and 43 are one psalm in reality, consisting of three 9-lined pentameter strophes, with a 3-lined pentameter refrain after each strophe. A slight emendation is required in the refrain after Strophe I. This first hymn of the Korahitic collection expresses the yearning of an exile for the worship at Jerusalem. It seems to be written from the northern region of Mt. Hermon and the sources of the Jordan and is probably the work of a Levitical singer who remembers with longing the joyous processions in which he has taken part ere yet the Temple was destroyed.

I.

As longeth the hind after channels of water,
 So longeth my soul after Thee, O God.
 For God my soul thirsteth, for the God of my life:¹
 O when shall I come to appear before God?²

Tears are my food by day and by night:
 All day they keep asking me, "Where is thy God?"³
 Yet of this am I mindful as I pour out my soul:—
 How I passed with the throng,⁴ led the way to
 God's house,
 With shouting and praise, the crowd making pil-
 grimage.

Why art cast down, my soul, and troubled upon
 me?

Hope thou in God, for still will I praise Him,
 For the help of His presence, my God!⁵

II.

On me is my soul bowed down, yet will I remember
Thee,

From Jordan's land and the Hermons,⁶ from Mi-
zar's⁷ hill.

Deep calleth to deep to the sound of Thy cataracts:
All Thy breakers and billows are over me passing.

Daily⁸ with me is prayer to the God of my life:

I say unto God, my Rock, "Why forgettest Thou
me?"

Wherefore go I lamenting, while the enemy presseth?
With breaking of bones have my foes kept reproach-
ing me:

All day they keep asking me, "Where is thy God?"

Why art cast down, my soul, and troubled upon
me?

Hope thou in God, for still will I praise Him,
For the help of His presence, my God!

III.

Judge me, O God, plead my plea 'gainst the peoples un-
kind!

From the man of deceit and of violence rescue
Thou me!

For why, O God of my refuge, rejectest Thou me?

Why take I my way lamenting, for the press of the
enemy,

While all day they keep asking me, "Where is thy
God?"

Send Thou Thy light and Thy faithfulness: let these
be my guide.

To Thy holy hill let them bring me, to the place of
Thy dwelling.

So shall I come to God's altar, the God of my gladness:
O my Joy, with the harp will I praise Thee, O
God, my God.

Why art cast down, my soul, and troubled
upon me?

Hope thou in God, for still will I praise Him,
For the help of His presence, my God!

-
1. The Hb. text has *hāi* (*of life*), probably a copyist's error for *haāi* (*of my life*).
 2. The original may have been "to see the face of God."
 3. This taunt is repeated in each of the three strophes.
 4. A difficult passage. Peters renders it, "I pass the huts." The general sense, as referring to past participation in the joyous Feast of Tabernacles, is clear.
 5. The text of this first refrain, in order to be assimilated to that of Strophes II and III, needs only the transfer of a single letter (*Vav*) from the *panāi* to the *'Elohai*. So the translation becomes, not "His countenance. O God . . ." but "my countenance and my God."
 6. Note the plural, *Hermons*. The reference is to the two or three topmost peaks of the great northern mountain mass.
 7. *Miz'ar* is probably the name of an unknown mountain in the north. The Gk. connects it with the root *tz'ar* (*to be little*) and renders it μικροῦ (*little*).
 8. Here the Hb. text introduces "a gloss of confidence," as follows: "Yahweh will command His kindness and in the night His song." The interpolation interrupts alike the thought and the metre and differs from the rest of the poem in using the Divine Name, *Yahweh*.

PSALM XLIV.

A NATIONAL PRAYER.

To the Director, to the sons of Korah, a Maskil. Psalm 44 is an old Korahitic hymn (probably dating from the exile) adapted to later circumstances in the Persian period. To this adaptation glosses have been added in Maccabean times. It is probable that originally the poem consisted of five 8-lined trimeter strophes, but, as it seems impossible, with any conviction, to tell what lines (apart from the Maccabean glosses) have been added, it has appeared best to leave their present irregularity unamended.

I.

O God,¹ we have heard with our ears:

Our fathers have told us—

The deeds Thou didst in their days:

In the days of yore.

Thou casted'st out nations and replanted'st them:²

Thou didst peoples afflict and restore them.

For they gat not the land by their sword:

Their arm did not win them the victory.

But Thy right hand and Thine arm:

And the light of Thy face, for Thou favored'st
them.

II.

It is Thou, O my King, O God,

That ordained'st victory for Jacob.

Through Thee we butt down our foes:

In Thy Name we tread down our assailants.

For not in my bow do I trust:

It is not my sword that shall save me.

But Thou o'er our foes giv'st us victory :
And Thou putttest to shame them that hate us.
In God we make boast all the day :
And Thy Name for ever we praise. *(Selah.)*³

III.

But Thou castest us off and hast shamed us :
And Thou goest not forth with our armies.
Thou turnest us back from the foe :
And our haters take us for their spoil.
Thou giv'st us like sheep for their eating :
And among the nations hast scattered us.
Thou sellest Thy people for nothing :
And profitest not by their price.
Thou sett'st us a shame to our neighbors :
Mock and scorn to those round about us.
Thou sett'st us a by-word for nations :
A shaking of head for the peoples.⁴

IV.

All this, but we do not forget Thee :
Nor Thy covenant have we belied.
Our heart is not backward turned :
Nor our steps from Thy path declined.
In the desert⁵ Thou castest us out :
And coverest us over with darkness.^{6 7}
Yea, for Thee are we slain all the day :
We are marked as sheep for the slaughter.

V.

Awake, wherefore sleepest Thou, Lord !
Arouse Thee, reject not for ever !
O wherefore Thy face dost Thou hide ?
Forgettest our toil and affliction ?

For our soul is bowed to the dust:
 And our belly cleaveth to the earth.
 Arise Thee, O come to our help:
 And redeem us because of Thy love!"

1. Probably, in the original psalm, the word was "Yahweh."
2. It is doubtful whether the "them" in this and the following line refers to *Israel* or to the "nations."
3. The *Selah* probably denotes that at this point a sacrifice was offered.
4. Verses 15 and 16 are a rather obvious Maccabean gloss:
 "All day long my disgrace is before me:
 And the shame of my face hath covered me.
 For the voice of the scoffer and scorner:
 For the sight of the foe and avenger."
5. Literally: "in a place of jackals."
6. The *tzalmaveth* (*shadow of death*) is here, as elsewhere (23:4), an error for *tzalmûth* (*dense darkness*).
7. Verses 21 and 22 are by a late Maccabean editor, who feels it necessary to protest the fidelity of his own time:
 "Have we forgotten the Name of our God?
 Or spread forth our hands to a foreign god?
 Will not God make search as to this;
 For He knoweth the secrets of the heart?"
8. Cf. 6:4.

PSALM XLV.

AN EPITHALAMIUM.

To the Director, upon Shoshannim (the Lilies), to the sons of Korah, a Maskil, a Love-song. Psalm 45 is the only love-song in the Psalter. It was probably composed for a royal wedding, but many opinions are held with respect to the monarch designated. Most scholars incline to the belief that he was one of the kings of Israel (Ahab, Jehu, or Jeroboam II), on account of the agreement of the poem with a northern atmosphere. Jehu seems the likeliest, and it may well be that a court poet of this reign was the author. Later the psalm attained a Messianic significance, largely through the references in vv. 6 and 7, though the description of the hero as "God" is the result of a misreading

I.

*Prologue.*¹

My heart is astir: the theme is good:
To speak am I my verse of a king:
My tongue is the pen of a ready scribe.²

II.

The Bridegroom.

Fairest art thou of the sons of men:
Grace is shed forth from thy lips:
So shall God bless thee for ever.

³Gird thee thy sword on thy thigh,
O hero, thy praise and thy majesty:
Span the bow, prosper, ride on,
For the word of truth and of right.
Dread things shall thy right hand teach thee:
Sharp thy darts⁴ in the heart of the foes of the king.

"For ever and ever shall be" thy throne:
 A sceptre of justice the rod of thy kingship.
 Right thou lovedst and wrong hast thou hated;
 Therefore hath God, thy God, anointed thee,
 With oil of rejoicing above thy fellows.

III.

The Bride.

Myrrh, aloes and cassia are all thy clothing:
 From ivory palaces⁷ minstrelsies gladden thee:
 Daughters of kings are among thy favored ones:
 At thy right stands a queen in golden attire.

Hearken, daughter, and see; yea, incline thine ear:
 Thy people forget, the house of thy father.
 It is the king who desireth thy beauty:
 For he is thy lord, therefore worship thou him.

IV.

The Wedding.

The daughter of Tyre⁸ with a gift is before thee:
 The rich of the people entreat thy favor.
 All glorious the daughter of the king is within:
 Textures of gold are her garments.

On a brodered cloth she is led to the king:
 Virgins, her comrades attending, are brought:
 With gladness and joy are they brought:
 To the king's palace they come.

V.

Epilogue.

Instead of thy fathers thou shalt have sons,
Whom in all the land thou shalt set for princes.
"Thy name let me praise for age after age:
So shall the peoples praise thee for ever.

1. Briggs (and others) regard both the Prologue and Epilogue as additions intended to assist the Messianic application.
2. Elsewhere in O.T. used only of Ezra. See Ezra 7:6.
3. These six lines describe the hero as warrior. The language suits Jehu very well, especially such a phrase as "Ride on." See II Kgs. 9.
4. "Peoples fall before thee" is a gloss, interfering with the metre.
5. The next five lines describe the bridegroom as king. The line, "with oil of rejoicing above thy fellows" strikingly recalls Elisha's anointing (by proxy) of Jehu in the presence of the captains. See II Kgs. 9:6.
6. The *'Elohim* of the present text was *Yahweh* in the earlier collection, and this, in all probability, was a copyist's error for *Yihyeh* (*shall be*).
7. Ivory palaces are mentioned, in O.T., only in I Kgs. 22:39 (as built by Ahab), and Amos 3:15 (as one of the luxuries of the reign of Jeroboam II).
8. A daughter of Tyre had become queen in the reign of Ahab, but now a daughter of Tyre is introduced as paying homage to the queen.
9. The last two lines are quite possibly a liturgical addition.

PSALM XLVI.

A NATIONAL HYMN.

To the Director, to the sons of Korah, upon Alamothe, a Song. This Korahitic psalm is a national anthem belonging either to the reign of Hezekiah or to that of Josiah. In the former case, it would describe vividly the situation at the time of Sennacherib's retreat. The opening phrase, "God is for us," reminds us inevitably of Isaiah's slogan of faith, "Emmanu-El." In this case, also, the reference to the stream which gladdens the City of God might well have been suggested by the completion of the aqueduct celebrated in the Siloam inscription. In the latter case, the commotion caused by the Scythian invasions would furnish a fitting atmosphere. In its present form the poem consists of three 6-lined tetrameter strophes, each with a couplet in tetrameter as a refrain or praise-shout. The first of these refrains is designated merely by the *Selah*. As Luther's *Ein feste Burg* and the *O God, our help in ages past* of the English hymnals, this psalm is one of the best known in the Psalter.

I.

God² is for us, refuge and strength:
 Help in troubles abundantly found.
 Therefore we fear not, though the earth totter:
 Though the hills fall in the midst of the seas.
 The seas are roaring, their waters foam:
 Shake the hills with the rising tide.
 (Yahweh of Hosts is with us:
 Jacob's God is our refuge.) (*Selah.*)³

II.

His streams gladden the City of God:
 Shrine of the dwelling of God, Most High.⁴

God is within her, she shall not be moved :
 God shall help her as breaketh the dawn.
 The peoples hummed, the kingdoms tottered :
 He gave forth His voice, earth melted away.
 Yahweh of Hosts is with us :
 Jacob's God is our refuge. (*Selah.*)

III.

⁵Come, gaze on the wonders of Yahweh :
 What terror He wrought on the earth.
 He stilleth wars to the end of the earth :
 Shivered the bow, shattered the spear.⁶
 Cease ye, know ye that I am God,
 'Mid the nations exalted, exalted on earth.
 Yahweh of Hosts is with us :
 Jacob's God is our refuge. (*Selah.*)

-
1. That is, probably, for the *soprano* (or rather *false alto*) voices. See Introduction.
 2. The original "Yahweh" has been replaced by "Elohim."
 3. The *Selah* in the Masoretic text has here evidently been equivalent to the refrain or praise-shout given at the close of the other two strophes.
 4. The Divine Name *Elyon* is here used. It is an archaic, poetic form.
 5. Some regard this third strophe as a late addition to the original.
 6. The words "Chariots He burneth with fire" must be omitted as a gloss of expansion. They are destructive of the metre and symmetry of the poem.

PSALM XLVII.

A PROCESSIONAL:

To the Director, to the sons of Korah, a Psalm. Psalm 47 is a *Mizmor*,¹ or psalm, arranged originally as a procession to the altar, with accompaniment of trumpets. It comes apparently from a period, such as the early Persian period, when Israel was at peace with the nations. Later it was used in the Synagogue service as a hymn for the New Year. The enthroned King of the nations is borne along, with music and singing, to take His place in the national shrine. In the Proper psalms of the Prayer Book, Psalm 47 is fittingly a psalm for Ascension Day.

I.

Clap, all ye peoples, your hands!²

Shout with glad voice unto God!³

For Yahweh Elyon⁴ is terrible:

A great King over all the earth.

II.

He subdueth peoples under us:

And nations under our feet.

He hath chosen for us an inheritance:

The majesty of Jacob whom He loved.

III.

God came up with a shout:⁵

Yahweh with sound of the trumpet.

Harp ye, O harp ye to God!

Harp to our King, O harp ye!

IV.

He is King over all the earth.
 Harp ye to Yahweh with *maskil*⁶
 God reigneth over the nations:
 He is throned on the hill of His holiness.

V.

The peoples' chieftains are gathered,
 With the people of Abraham's God;
 For God's are the shields of the earth:
 Greatly exalted is He.⁷

-
1. A *Mizmor* (psalm) etymologically suggests the musical accompaniment rather than the singing. The root *zamar* (to strum) is used several times in verses 7 and 8.
 2. The clapping of hands in rhythm was an accompaniment to singing in worship in many primitive rituals.
 3. Here (as in many psalms of this collection) the original Divine Name was probably "Yahweh" rather than "Elohim."
 4. *Elyon* (*Most High*), as in 46:4, is a poetic, archaic name for God.
 5. This is a reference to the presence of God in the procession up the hill of Zion to the Temple.
 6. *Maskil* signifies a meditative or contemplative poem. See Introduction.
 7. The line requires for measure a Divine Name. Briggs suggests "Elyon"—"Greatly exalted is Elyon."

PSALM XLVIII.

IN PRAISE OF ZION.

A Song, a Psalm (Mizmor), to the sons of Korah. Psalm 48 is a "royal psalm" (like 46, 47, 96-100), probably of the late Persian period. But, in an earlier form, it celebrated a victory during the monarchy, in all probability the victory over the host of Sennacherib, through which Jerusalem was saved. The Gk. version ascribes the use of the psalm to the second day of the week in the Jewish-Egyptian rite, and in the Anglican P. B. it is a Proper Psalm for Whitsunday.

I.

Great is Yahweh and greatly to be praised,
 In the city of our God, His holy hill.
 Beautiful in elevation, joy of all the land,
 Is Zion's hill, the ridge to the north.
 Great is the city of the King:¹
 God in her palaces is known for a fortress.

II.

For, behold, the kings assembled:
 They passed over² together:
 They saw, so were they amazed:
 They were dismayed: they fled:³
 Trembling seized there upon them:
 Anguish as of one in travail.⁴

III.

Like as we heard, so have we seen:⁵
 God hath for ever established her. (*Selah.*)

We ponder Thy mercy, O God,
 In the midst of Thy Temple.
 As is Thy Name, so is Thy praise,
 To the ends of the earth.

IV.

Full of justice is Thy right hand,—
 And Mount Zion rejoiceth.
 Let the daughters of Judah be glad,
 Because of Thy judgments.
 Go round about Zion and circle her: ⁶
 Count up her watch-towers.

V.

Set ye your mind on her ramparts:
 Consider her citadels;
 So that ye may tell
 To the next generation
 That this God is our God for ever:
 He is our leader. ⁷

-
1. This rendering is to be preferred to the more usual:
 "City of the great King."
 2. Or "they became enraged also" (J. M. Powis Smith).
 3. Cf. Caesar's famous *Veni, vidi, vici*.
 4. A glossator has here added: "With an east wind Thou shatterest the ships of Tarshish," an addition quite foreign to the description of a battle on the land.
 5. A late editor has added, at the expense of the measure:
 "In the city of Yahweh Sabaoth:
 In the city of our God."

6. The circling of a city was for the purpose of bringing good fortune to the city. It is based on a well-known piece of imitative magic, in imitation of the motion of the sun (supposedly) around the earth. Cf. the Indian *pradakshina* and the more modern "beating of the bounds."
7. The words rendered "unto death" should be '*Alāmoth*' rather than '*Al-mūth*'. They are not in the Gk. and are probably a direction for the passage to be sung by the soprano voices. Possibly they belong to the next psalm.

PSALM XLIX.

THE RIDDLE OF THE WICKED.

To the Director, to the sons of Korah, a Psalm (Mizmor). Though ascribed to the sons of Korah, Psalm 49 reminds us more of the Asaphic psalms which follow. It is similar in tone to such psalms as 37 and 73 and to the book of Job. It belongs to the very late Persian period or possibly to the beginning of the Greek period. Its subject is the troublesome question as to the prosperity of the wicked, upon which there is as yet no light in a doctrine of future retribution. In its present form the poem begins with an introductory Ode in which the problem is suggested. Then follow two 14-lined strophes, each with a refrain. Strophe I asks the question: "Why should I fear?" Strophe II furnishes the answer: "Fear not, since the wicked come to an end in the grave." The Latin title: *Vox ecclesiae super lazaro et divite purpurato* is not inappropriate.

I.

*(Introduction.)*¹

Hear this, all ye peoples:

Hearken, all dwellers on earth!

Sons of mankind and sons of men:

Rich men and poor men together!

My mouth shall discourse on wisdom:

My heart's musing shall be understanding.

I incline mine ear to a parable:

On the lyre will I open my riddle.

II.

(The Riddle.)

Why should I fear in days of evil?

When the iniquity of foes encompasseth me?—

Even those who trust in their might:

And boast their abundance of wealth.

Man cannot at all offer ransom:

Cannot give unto God His price:²

That he should continue to live,

And never behold the Pit.

For he seeth that wise men die:

And fools and boors perish as well.

And they leave their wealth for others:

Their graves are their homes for ever.

Their dwellings are for age after age:—

Theirs whose names were over the lands.

Yea, man in worth abideth not:

He is like the cattle that perish.

III.

(The Answer.)

This is their way who are confident:

The end of them that are satisfied.³

Like a flock in Sheol are they shepherd:

Death driveth them on as their shepherd.

Each morning their form wasteth away:

Sheol is their dwelling.⁴

Fear not when a man getteth rich:

When his dwelling's glory increaseth.

For he dieth and taketh nought with him:
 Nor goeth his glory down after him.
 Though his soul would be happy with living:
 And would thank you if things went well:
 It will go to the shades of his ancestors:
 Nevermore shall it see the light.
 Yea, man in worth abideth not:
 He is like the cattle that perish.

1. The *Introduction* is possibly the work of a later editor. The language reminds us of 78:1-3, especially in the use of the terms "parable" and "riddle."
2. Here is interpolated a gloss of emphasis, in a different metre from the rest of the poem: "For their soul's ransom is too costly that he should let go for ever."
3. Here occurs, in the Masoretic text, a *Selah*, giving opportunity for a *Praise-shout*, with the object of expressing relief at the destruction of the wicked.
4. Here is interpolated a gloss: "Surely God will redeem my soul from the land of Sheol when He taketh it." This is followed by a second *Selah*.

PSALM L.

ISRAEL ON TRIAL.

A Psalm (Mizmor), to Asaph. Psalm 50, which probably belongs to the late Persian period, is the first of those ascribed to Asaph, the others being 73-83. The "sons of Asaph" were a guild of Temple singers frequently mentioned in the Chronicles. The Asaphic psalms are particularly characterized by their strongly religious use of history. This psalm presents a very dramatic picture of God summoning Israel to trial in the presence of His witnesses, Heaven and Earth, on the charge of failure to keep His law. The poem is arranged in three 12-lined strophes, each followed by a quatrain in trimeter which seems to have been used as a Praise-shout. The introduction: "El Elohim Yahweh speaketh" of v. 1 and the "But unto the wicked saith God" of verse 16 are glosses. The latter is misleading, since God is addressing Israel throughout.

I.

'Yahweh² calleth earth from the rising of the sun

Unto its going down.

Out of Zion, perfection of beauty,

God shineth forth.³

Fire devoureth before Him:

And round Him it stormeth exceedingly.

From above He calleth the heavens,

And earth, to judge His people:—

"Gather together My saints,

Who covenanted with Me in sacrifice!"

The heaven proclaimeth His righteousness,

That God is about to judge. (Selah.)⁴

"Hear, my people, and I will speak:
Israel, I witness against you.
Yahweh, your God am I:
(Who brought you up out of Egypt)." ^s

II.

"I rebuke thee not for thy sacrifices:
For thy burnt-offerings always before Me.
From thy house I would take no bullock:
Nor he-goats out of thy flocks.
For Mine are all beasts of the wood:
On a thousand hills the cattle.

"I know all the fowl of the mountains:
In the field all that moveth is Mine.
Am I hungry—I shall not tell thee:
For Mine is the world and its fullness.
Shall I eat of the flesh of bulls?
Or the blood of rams shall I drink?

"Sacrifice unto God thanksgiving:
And pay to the Highest thy vows.
Call on Me in the day of trouble:
I will save thee, and glorify thou Me.
(*Selah.*)^a

III.

"What right hast thou to recite My statutes:
Or to take on thy mouth My covenant?
Whereas thou hatest instruction:
And castest My words behind thee.
If thou seest a thief thou art friendly with him:
And thy portion hath been with adulterers.

"Thou chargest thy mouth with evil:
 And thy tongue hath framed deceit.
 Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother:
 Thine own mother's son hast thou slandered.
 This thou hast done, and can I be silent?
 Hast thou deemed that I was like thee?

 "I will convict thee and set it before thee."⁸
 Consider now this, ye forgetters of God.
 He honoreth Me who offereth thanksgiving:
 To him will I show the salvation of God."

-
1. A redactionist has thought it necessary to designate the speaker in the psalm by inserting an introduction: "El Elohim Yahweh speaketh."
 2. The original "Yahweh" of this line has been displaced by the three-fold Divine Name of the introductory gloss.
 3. A gloss of expansion has here been interpolated: "Our God shall come and shall not keep silence."
 4. The *Selah* probably indicates that the succeeding quatrain was used as a Praise-shout.
 5. A line has here to be supplied to complete the quatrain. By comparison with 81:11 it seems probable that this should be: "Who brought thee up out of Egypt."
 6. Probably, as at the close of the first strophe, the *Selah* here marks the use of the quatrain as a Praise-shout.
 7. Here a gloss has been inserted: "But unto the wicked saith God." The evident intention of the scribe was to suggest that God was speaking here of the heathen nations.
 8. The gloss: "Lest I rend and there be none to rescue" has also been inserted from the belief that the wicked outside Israel are here addressed.

PSALM LI.

A PSALM OF PENITENCE.

To the Director, a Psalm (Mizmor), to David, when Nathan the Prophet came to him after he had gone in to Bathsheba. The fact that the traditional association of Psalm 51 with the sin and repentance of David is now abandoned does not detract from the significance of the poem as the profoundest expression of penitence in the Psalter. It probably belongs to the age of Nehemiah, but the language reminds us strikingly of Isaiah i. The ritual of the cleansing of the leper also seems to be in the mind of the author. The poem consists of four 10-lined trimeter strophes, but several brief glosses have been added to the original.

I.

Pity me, God, after Thy love:

After Thy mercy wipe out my transgressions.

O wash me thoroughly from my guilt:

And from my sins O make me clean.

For my transgressions I do know:

Ever before me is my sin.

'Gainst Thee, Thee only, have I sinned:

And done the evil in Thine eyes.

That in Thy words Thou should'st be just:

And in Thy judgment should'st be clear.

II.

Behold, in guilt was I begotten:

In sin my mother did conceive me.

But, lo, in truth Thou takest delight:

And wisdom Thou dost make me know.

Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean :
Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.¹
Rejoicing and gladness let me hear :
That the bones Thou hast crushed may exult.
Hide Thou Thy face from my transgressions :
And all mine iniquities wipe out.

III.

Create me a heart that is pure :²
And renew a firm spirit within me.
O cast Thou me not from Thy presence :
Thy Holy Spirit remove not.
Restore me the joy of Thy victory :
Let a princely spirit support me.
Let me teach transgressors Thy ways :
So that sinners to Thee shall return.
Redeem me from bloodshed, O God :³
That my tongue may sound forth Thy justice.

IV.

O Lord, my lips do Thou open :
That my mouth may declare Thy praise.
For not in slaughter delightest Thou :
Nor pleasure hast Thou in burnt-offering.
Of a broken spirit the sacrifice—
A bruised heart Thou wilt not despise.⁴
Do good in Thy kindness to Zion :
O build the walls of Jerusalem.⁵
Then the sacrifices of justice shall please Thee :⁶
Then young bulls they shall lay on Thine altar.

1. Cf. the Babylonian prayer, addressed to Shamash:
 "Cleanse him like a . . . vessel,
 Scour him like a butter-dish;
 Like burnished copper make him shine;
 Free him from the spell."
2. A glossator has inserted the words "O God," making the line too long.
3. Omit the gloss of expansion: "God of my salvation."
4. Omit the gloss: "O God."
5. Especially suitable for the age of Nehemiah.
6. Here has been inserted a gloss of expansion: "Burnt-offerings and whole burnt-offerings."

PSALM LII.

THE WICKED NOBLE.

To the Director, a Maskil, to David, when Doeg, the Edomite, came and told Saul and said unto him, David is come to the house of Abimelech. This title is based on the narrative of I Sam. 22:9-10 and has no historical value. The psalm probably belongs to the age of Jeremiah and refers to some unscrupulous and lying noble who had slandered the people of God. Cf. Pashur, Jer. 20:1, and Hananiah, Jer. 28:1. Some, however, have preferred a Persian connection on account of the strong ethical emphasis upon truth-telling. The last words of the poem: "For it is good, in the presence of Thy saints" must be regarded as a gloss.

I.

Why boastest thou of evil, mighty one,
All day against the pious?¹
Thou plannest with thy tongue destruction—
A sharp razor working deceit.
Evil thou lovest better than good:
Lying than speaking the truth. (Selah.)

II.

Thou lovest all words that devour,
O tongue of deceit!
Therefore 'El shall crush thee for ever:
Yea, He shall seize thee.
From thy tent He shall pluck thee away:
From the land of the living uproot thee. (Selah.)

III.

And the righteous shall see it and fear:

But at him shall they laugh:—

“See the mighty man who set not

God for his stronghold:

But relied on the might of his wealth:

And was strong in his guile.”²

IV.

As for me, I am like a green olive-tree,³

In the house of God.

I trust in the mercy of God,

For ever and ever.

I will ever give thanks because Thou hast done it:

And will wait on Thy Name.⁴

-
1. The text is here evidently corrupt. I have adopted the reading: *‘al ḥesid, against the pious*, instead of *ḥesed-‘el, the mercy of God*.
 2. Briggs has “money” instead of “guile” as making the parallelism more perfect.
 3. Cf. Jer. 11:16.
 4. Note the double gloss: “for it is good,” “in the presence of Thy saints.”

PSALM LIII.

THE SHAMELESS ONE.

To the Director, upon Maḥalath, a Maskil, to David.
Psalm 53 is an Elohist version of 14, which is probably the original. The title of 53 differs from that of 14, however, in describing the poem as a Maskil and as being set to the melody, *Maḥalath*. The differences of text in the two versions are of minor importance. The psalm probably belongs to the period of the Restoration when the blatant opposition of insolent enemies was particularly trying.

PSALM LIV.

A PRAYER OF THE PIOUS.

To the Director, on Neginoth, a Maskil, to David, when the Ziphites came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us? Psalm 54 is a *Maskil*, arranged for the stringed instruments and in the title referred to an incident in the life of David. It probably belongs to the early years of Josiah. Outside the two glosses (which, moreover, interrupt the thought of the poem) each line ends with the first person singular pronominal suffix *î*. This is represented in the transcription by the underlined pronoun.

I.

God,¹ by Thy Name deliver *me*:
 And by Thy power do *me* justice!
 God, hear Thou *my* prayer:
 Give ear to the words of *my* mouth!
 For strangers are risen against *me*:
 And the violent seek *my* life.²

II.

But, lo, God is *my* helper:
 My Lord,³ upholding *my* soul.
 Let evil recoil on *mine* enemies:
 In Thy truth destroy Thou *my* foes.^{4 5}
 From every trouble deliver *me*:
 And mine eye shall look on *mine* enemies.

1. The 'Elohim here (and in v. 2) probably represents an original *Yahweh*.

2. Here is inserted a gloss: "They set not God before them."

3. That is: 'Adonai.
4. Read "my foes" instead of "them," thus preserving both the parallelism and the assonance.
5. Verse 6 is a gloss:
 "Then gladly to Thee will I sacrifice:
 Praise Thy Name because it is good."
 It might possibly be a *Praise-shout* raised at the moment of the sacrifice.

PSALM LV.

A COMPOSITE PSALM.

To the Director, on Neginoth, a Maskil, to David. The psalm is really composite, consisting of *A* (vv. 1-7), *A Prayer for Deliverance*; and *B*. (vv. 9-23), *An Imprecation upon a Treacherous Foe*, who had been an intimate acquaintance of the poet. This foe has been identified with Ahithophel (II Sam. 15), or with Pashur (Jer. 20), but no evidence exists to show who is meant. The psalm belongs probably to the age of Nehemiah, when opponents within the state were by no means uncommon.

*A.**A Prayer.*

I.

Give ear, God, to my prayer :

Be not dumb to my cry !

Approach me and answer me !

I am depressed and lament in my grief.

Because of the voice of the foe :

Because of the cry of the wicked :

Because they move evil against me :

And pursue me with anger.

II.

My heart writheth within me :

Death's terrors have fallen upon me.

Fear and trembling have entered me :

And horrors o'erwhelm me.

'Who will give me wings of a dove?
 Away would I fly and find rest.
 Lo, far away would I flee:
 I would lodge in the wilderness. (*Selah.*)

B.

An Imprecation.

I.

'Swallow them with a stormy wind:
 Divide their tongue!
 For violence have I beheld:
 And strife in the city.
 By day and by night they encircle her,
 On the walls thereof.
 Trouble and mischief are in her midst:
 Ruin within her.
 Nor from her market-place doth there depart
 Oppression and fraud.

II.

For it is not a foe that reproacheth me:—
 Thus I had borne it.
 Not my hater that lordeth it over me:—
 From him I could hide.
 But thou, a man and mine equal,
 My intimate friend.
 In God's house we held sweet counsel together:
 We walked in procession.
 Let death come suddenly on them:
 Alive let them go down to Sheol.³

III.

As for me—unto God do I cry:
 And Yahweh will save me.
 At evening and morning and noon-time,
 I sigh and lament.
 But my voice He hath heard—He redeemeth
 In safety my soul,
 From the battle I had: for with many
 They were against me.
 Ishmael and Jaleam,⁴
 And the dwellers of the East.⁵

IV.

Against his confederates he put forth his hand:
 And his covenant violated.
 His face was smoother than curds:
 But with war in his heart.
 His words were smoother than oil:
 Yet were they swords.⁶
 Thou, O Yahweh, shalt cast them down
 To the Pit of Destruction.
 The men of blood and deceitfulness
 Shall not halve their days.⁷

1. Omit the gloss: "And I said."

2. A gloss has been here inserted: "O hasten my escape."

3. Here has been inserted another gloss: "For wickedness is in their dwelling, in the midst of them."

4. This is a difficult line. With the alteration of one letter we may accept the present transcription. The Masoretic text may be translated: "God will hear and answer them: even He that is enthroned from of old."

5. Omit the gloss: "The men who have no changes and who fear not God."
6. A pious scribe has here interpolated the verse:
"O cast upon Yahweh thy burden and He will sustain thee:
He will never suffer the righteous to be moved."
7. To adapt the psalm to liturgical use, there is added at the close: "But I will trust in Thee."

PSALM LVI.

A NATIONAL PRAYER.

To the Director, upon Yonath-elim-r'hogim (The Dove of the Distant Terebinths), to David, a Miktam, when the Philistines took him in Gath. This historical reference merely means, of course, that the psalm suits such a situation. It really belongs to the Babylonian period, shortly before the exile, and is a prayer against the powerful and menacing enemies of the nation. It is the first of the five *Miktams*. In the following transcription the refrain which in the text occurs only after the first and third strophes is placed after each of the four. It was probably equivalent to a *Selah* and was used as a kind of *Praise-shout*.

I.

Pity me, God,¹ for man doth trample me!
 All day long the fighter oppresseth me.
 My foes are trampling me all day long:
 For many are they who are fighting against me.
 O Most High,² in the day when I fear,
 As for me, in Thee will I trust.
 In God—I praise His word—
 In God I trust and fear not.
 What can flesh do unto me?

II.

All day long they pervert my words:
 'Gainst me are all their evil designs.
 They gather: they lurk: they watch my steps:
 As they lie in wait for my soul.

Recompense them because of their crimes!

In wrath cast down the peoples, O God!

In God—I praise His word—³

In God I trust and fear not.

What can flesh do unto me?

III.

My wanderings Thou dost record:

Put Thou my tears in Thy bottle.

Shall they not be in Thy record?

So are my foes turned backward,

In the day when I call,

I know this because God is mine.

In God—I praise His word—

In God I trust and fear not.

What can flesh do unto me?

IV.

Upon me, O God, are my vows:

Thankofferings to Thee will I pay.

For Thou hast saved my soul from death:

And from stumbling my feet.

So shall I walk before God

In the light of the living.

In God—I praise His word—⁴

In God I trust and fear not.

What can flesh do unto me?

1. In the original poem the Divine Name was probably *Yahweh*.

2. The word is *Marōm* and is transferred from the preceding line.

3. The refrain at the end of the second strophe is not in the text.
4. The refrain at the end of this strophe is also supplied. There was probably a *Selah* to show the use of a Praise-shout at the conclusion of each strophe.

PSALM LVII.

A COMPOSITE PSALM.

To the Director, 'Al-tashith, a Miktam, to David, when he fled from Saul in the cave. The title only indicates some suitability to the feelings expressed in the poem. The psalm, however, is composite, consisting of A. (vv. 1-4, 6), A Prayer for Deliverance from Enemies, and B. (vv. 5, 7-11), A National Hymn, which also appears as part of 108. Both of these seem to belong to the Persian period, subsequent to the time of Nehemiah. The term *'Al-tashith* (*Destroy not*) in the title should probably be *'Al-tashith* (*Upon Tashith*), indicating a tone for cantillation.

A.

Prayer for Deliverance.

Be gracious to me, God, be gracious!
 For in Thee doth my soul find shelter.
 In the shade of Thy wings I seek refuge:
 Till destruction be overpast.

II.

I cry unto God, Most High:¹
 To God who is bountiful² unto me.
 May He send from heaven and save me:
 May He send forth His truth and His love!³
(*Selah.*)

III.

I lie in the midst of lions:
 Among those who prey upon men.
 Their teeth are spears and arrows:
 And a sharp sword is their tongue.

IV.

They have spread a net for my feet:

That my soul may succumb.⁴

They have digged a pit before me:

And into the midst of it fell.

(*Selah.*)

B.

A Hymn of Praise.

Exalt Thyself on the heavens, O God!⁵

Over all the earth be Thy glory!

I.

Fixed is my heart, O God, fixed is my heart:⁶

I will sing and make melody.

Awake up, my glory; awake, lute and harp!

I will awake the dawn.

II.

I will praise Thee, O Lord, 'midst the peoples:

Among the nations make melody.

For Thy love is great to the heavens:

And unto the skies Thy faithfulness.

Exalt Thyself on the heavens, O God!

Over all the earth be Thy glory!

1. I. e. 'El 'Elyon.

2. In this line the Gk. is preferable to the Hebrew.

3. The line: "He hath shamed him that trampleth me" is probably a gloss, though it is possible to consider it, in its parallelism, to be preferred to the line which I

have retained. One of the two must be dropped as interfering with the symmetry of the strophe.

4. Moffatt preserves the parallelism by the rendering: "And they were caught in it themselves."
5. This verse has been wrongly inserted before v. 6.
6. The repetition: "Fixed is my heart" is not in the version given in Psalm 108. It may be a gloss.

PSALM LVIII.

THE UNJUST RULERS.

To the Director, upon Destroy (or, Al-Tashith), a Miktam, to David. Psalm 58 is undoubtedly one of the oldest psalms in the Psalter, belonging to the age of the monarchy. It is a complaint against certain oppressive rulers, but it is not certain whether these are native or foreign. The language is difficult but exceedingly vigorous, especially in its use of heaped-up and unrelated metaphors. Omitting verse 10, which is a Maccabean gloss, the poem consists of an opening *Question* and a concluding *Answer*, each in the form of a couplet, between which are two 8-lined tetrameter strophes. One of these describes the offences of the rulers against whom the complaint is launched, and the other invokes a terrible curse from the God of Israel.

Question.

Do ye speak what is right, ye rulers?¹
Do ye judge justly the sons of men?

I.

Nay, in your heart ye work iniquity:
With your hands in the land ye plan violence.
Estranged from the womb are the wicked:
Astray from birth, speaking lies.
Their venom like that of a serpent:
Like deaf adder which stoppeth his ear:
That it hear not the voice of the charmer,—
The best-skilled weaver of spells.

II.

Break, O God, their teeth in their mouth:

Smash, Yahweh, the jaw-teeth of the lions!

Let them run off like water that floweth:

Like luxuriant grass that wilteth:²

Like the snail that passeth in slime:³

Like the still-born child let them see not the sun:

Ere your pots feel the heat of the thorns—

Green or dry—let Him whirl them away!⁴

Answer.

So shall men say: For the just is reward!

There is surely a God Who judgeth on earth!

1. That is, *'Elohim* (literally, *Gods*), often used for rulers.
Cf. 81:1, 6.
2. Peters translates: "Let him tread his bow as one that scrapeth the ground."
3. The Gk. has "wax."
4. Here is inserted a Maccabean gloss:
"The righteous rejoiceth to see the vengeance:
His footsteps shall wash in the blood of the wicked."
Some take this as indicating that the psalm was used as a vintage song. Possibly this is suggested also by the term "Upon Destroy."

PSALM LIX.

A NATIONAL PRAYER.

To the Director, upon Tashith (or, 'Al-Tashith), to David, a Miktam, when Saul sent and they watched the house to slay him. The psalm probably belongs to the time immediately preceding the arrival of Nehemiah at Jerusalem. At this time the enemies of Judah were literally like snarling and mean-spirited dogs prowling around the city. The text of the poem is a good deal corrupted and a number of glosses have been interpolated. But the general strophical arrangement, consisting of two 12-lined strophes, each with a 4-lined refrain, is fairly clear. The following transcription conforms generally to the rendering of Dr. Briggs.

I.

Deliver me from mine enemies, my God:

Set me above them that rise up against me!

From the workers of iniquity deliver me:

And save me from the men of blood!

For, lo, they lurk for my life:

The mighty are gathered against me.

Without fault or sin of mine,¹

They run and take their stand.

Awake at my call and see,

Thou Yahweh of Hosts!²

Arise to visit the nations:

Pity not the treacherous makers of trouble. (*Selah.*)

They return in the evening:
 They snarl like a dog:
 They encircle the city:
 They bark with their mouth.³
 My Strength, unto Thee I make melody:
 For, Yahweh, Thou art my Fortress.

II.

May my God in His love come to meet me:
 May God make me look on my foes!
 Slay them not lest my people forget:
 Shake them with Thy power and bring them down!
 (Bring them down), O Lord, my Shield:⁴
 (Punish) the sin of their mouth!
 (Take them for) the words of their lips:
 In their pride, yea, let them be taken!
 For their cursing and the lies that they utter,
 Consume them in wrath till they perish!
 So is a God in Jacob made known,
 Ruling unto the ends of the earth.

They return in the evening:
 They snarl like a dog:
 They encircle the city:
 They prowl for food.⁵
 My Strength, unto Thee I make melody:
 For, Yahweh, Thou art my Fortress.

1. Omit the *Yahweh* of the text, as making the line too long.
 2. Omit the expansion, "God of Israel."

3. Verses 7b-8 is a gloss of enlargement, foreign to the idea of the "dog-chorus":

"Swords are in their lips. For who (say they) doth hear?

But, Yahweh, Thou wilt laugh at them: Thou wilt mock at all the nations."

4. The text here is very much confused. Verbs seem required for each of the three lines to make them symmetrical. The "our" of v. 11 should be "my."

5. Enlargements to the "dog-chorus" are here again interpolated:

v. 15b: "And tarry all night if not satisfied."

v. 16: "But I will sing of Thy strength:

Yea, I will sing of Thy love in the morning:

For Thou hast been my fortress,

And a refuge in the day of my trouble."

PSALM LX.

A COMPOSITE PSALM.

To the Director, upon Shushan-Eduth (the Lily of the Law), a Miktam, to David, to teach: when he strove with Aram Naharaim and Aram Zobah, when Joab returned and smote Edom in the Valley of Salt, even twelve thousand. Cf. II Sam. 8: 13ff; 10: 16ff; I Ch. 18: 12ff; 19: 6ff. Actually we have here a composite psalm, consisting of A. (vv. 1-5, 10-12), a Prayer in time of national disaster; and B. (vv. 6-9), an ancient oracle (probably the original *Miklam*) giving assurance of the possession of the whole land. The latter part of the poem has been incorporated in 108.

A.*Prayer for Deliverance.*

I.

God,¹ Thou hast spurned us, hast broken us down:

Thou wast wroth and hast turned against us.

Thou hast made the earth quake, Thou didst rend her:

Heal Thou her wounds, for she totters.

II.

Thou hast made Thy people see hard things:

Wine of reeling Thou gavest to drink.

To them that fear Thee Thou gavest a sign

That they should flee from before the bowmen.

(*Selah.*)

III.

To the end that Thy loved ones be rescued,

Let Thy right hand save us, and answer us,

O God, who hast spurned us (and shamed us),²

And wentest not forth with our armies.

IV.

O help us against the enemy:
 For vain is the help of man.
 With God we shall yet do valiantly:
 For He shall tread down our foes.

B.

An Oracle.

God in His sanctuary spake:
 "I will triumph, will portion out Shechem:
 And will mete out the valley of Succoth.

Mine is Gilead and Mine is Manasseh:
 And Ephraim the defence of My head:
 Judah is My sceptre.

Moab is My wash-bowl:
 Over Edom I cast My sandal:
 Over Philistia will I triumph."

Who will lead Me inside the fortress?
 Who will bring Me to Edom?
 Is it not Thou, O God?^s

-
1. Here, and in several subsequent verses, the original was probably *Yahweh* rather than *Elohim*.
 2. Verses 10, 11, and 12 have been transposed from their original place. In the present text these concluding lines of A. follow B.
 3. The last line is imperfect, but an affirmative answer seems clearly to be required to the question, "Who will bring me to Edom?"

PSALM LXI.

THE KING'S PRAYER.

To the Director, on Neginah, to David. Psalm 61 evidently belongs to the time of the monarchy and is a royal prayer in time of war. Both for thought and language it may be compared with 17, 20, 21, and 27. The poem consists of three 4-lined tetrameter strophes, but glosses of the time of the exile, and later have crept into verses 3 and 5, expressive of longing for the land and the Temple service.

I.

Hear my cry¹ and heed my prayer!

Unto Thee I cry;² my heart is fainting.

To the Rock that is higher than I do Thou lift me:

For Thou art my Fortress, a strong tower from the enemy.³

II.

For Thou, O God, hast heard my vows:

Of them that fear Thee Thou hast granted the request.

Days to the days of the King Thou wilt add:

Till from age to age be his years.

III.

May he sit on his throne before God for ever!

May mercy and truth encircle him round!

So shall I harp Thy Name for ever:

Fulfilling my vows from day to day.

1. As in the Gk., the *'Elohim* is here omitted. It is not required for the measure.
2. An exile, in some far-off land, has here interpolated the words: "from the bound of the earth."
3. Here has been introduced another gloss:
 "Let me dwell in Thy tent for ever:
 Let me find refuge under the covert of Thy wings"
Selah.

Perhaps the *Selah* suggests that these lines were used by the congregation as a kind of Praise-shout.

PSALM LXII.

A HYMN OF FAITH.

To the Director, upon Jeduthun, a Psalm (Mizmor), to David. This psalm, set (like 39 and 77) to the melody *Jeduthun*, is probably from the time of Jeremiah. It is expressive of silent confidence in God in a time of great danger. The word translated "surely" is very characteristic and testifies to the depth of this confidence. There is an opening quatrain which also serves for a refrain. At the close are several glosses of a gnomic character which were added by editors from time to time.

Surely, to God, O my soul, am I silent :
 From Him my salvation.
 Surely, He is my Rock, my salvation :
 My fortress—I shall not be shaken.

I.

How long will ye set on a man,
 So that ye may kill him?
 Ye are all like an unsafe wall,
 Or a tottering fence.

II.

Surely, they planned from his height
 Over to push him.
 In lies they delight : they bless with the mouth :
 In their heart they are cursing. (*Selah.*)¹

Surely, to God, O my soul, am I silent :
 From Him is my hope.
 Surely, He is my Rock, my salvation :
 My fortress—I shall not be shaken.

III.

In God is my safety, my glory:
 In God my strong Rock, and my refuge.
 O trust in Him always, ye people:
 Pour out before Him your heart.²

IV.

Surely, but breath are the sons of Adam:
 The sons of man a delusion.
 Lighter are they on the scales
 Than a breath of air.³

1. Very possibly the *Selah* here signifies the use of the refrain following as chanted by the whole congregation.
2. The words "God to us is a refuge" are either a gloss or (as indicated by the *Selah*) a Praise-shout sung by the congregation.
3. The final glosses, added here, are by different hands. They are:
 - i. "Trust not in extortion:
 Nor grow proud through robbery.
 If riches increase:
 Set not in them your heart."
 - ii. "Once spake God:
 And twice this have I heard:
 That strength is God's,
 And Thine, Lord, is love."
 - iii. "For Thou shalt reward man according to his works,"

PSALM LXIII.

THE EXILE KING.

A Psalm (Mizmor), to David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah. The historical association of the title is probably suggested by the reference in v. 1 to "a dry land." The psalm expresses the longing of an exile king, possibly Jehoiachin, from the land of captivity. Some, however, take the closing strophe (vv. 9-11) to be a gloss, or a fragment of an older royal hymn. The last line of the poem is a Maccabean gloss in a somewhat vindictive mood. There is a free use of *ka* as a final syllable (shown in the transcription by the underlined 2nd. pers. sing. pronoun), but it is perilous to assume that lines without this final assonance are interpolations.

I.

O God, Thou, my God, I seek *Thee*:
My soul panteth for *Thee*.
My flesh longeth for *Thee*:
In a dry land and weary.¹
So in the shrine have I seen *Thee*:
Beholding Thy strength and *Thy* glory.

II.

For better than life is *Thy* love:
My lips laud *Thee*.
So with my life will I bless *Thee*:²
I lift up my hands in *Thy* Name.
As with marrow and fatness satisfied:
With joyful lips will I praise *Thee*.

III.

When on my bed I remember *Thee*:

In the night watches muse on *Thee*:

Then Thou becomest my help:

In the shade of *Thy* wings I rejoice.

Close to *Thee* cleaveth my soul:

Thy right hand hath hold on me.

.

And they who seek after my soul,—

They shall go under the earth:

To the power of the sword given over,

They shall be a portion for foxes.

And the king shall rejoice in God:

All that swear by Him shall exult.^a

—————

1. A glossator adds the explanatory words: "where no water is."
2. Peters quotes as a parallel the lines of a Babylonian psalm:
 "And I—I dreamed of prayer and supplication;
 Prayer was my musing, sacrifice my law;
 The day they honored the gods the joy of my heart;
 The day they followed the goddess my profit and my weal."
3. A Maccabean editor adds the line:
 "For the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped."

PSALM LXIV.

AGAINST EVIL PLOTTERS.

To the Director, a Psalm (Mizmor), to David. The psalm is ascribed to David, without any specific historical reference. It refers probably to the intrigues carried on against the Jews in the Persian period. The text is in places difficult and probably corrupt. Verse 11 is a Maccabean gloss expressive of joy over the imminent fate of the wicked.

I.

Hear, O God, my voice in my plaint:
From the fear of the enemy rescue my life!
From the council of wickedness hide me:
From the throng of the workers of iniquity!¹

II.

Who have sharpened their tongue like a sword:
Have aimed bitter speech like an arrow:
In secret to shoot at the innocent:
Suddenly shoot they and fear not.

III.

They strengthen themselves in ill speech:
They write out snares to conceal them.²
They say: "Who is there that shall see them?"
So they devise plans of evil.

IV.

They conceal their well-planned devices:
With a heart that is deep each draws near:³
Till God shall loose them an arrow:
Suddenly cometh their wounding.

V.

And He maketh them fall through their tongue:

All that look on them wag the head:⁴

And shall tell forth the doing of God:

Yea, they shall consider His works.⁵

-
1. Verse 2 (E.V.) is not in Gk. B and Briggs takes it as a gloss. But it suits the parallelism and symmetry of the strophe.
 2. Peters refers this to the custom of writing and burying spells in the soil of an enemy's territory.
 3. The translation is doubtful; an alternative is:
"The inward part of man and his heart are deep."
 4. Here a gloss has been inserted: "and all men shall fear."
 5. A gloss, from Maccabean times, has here been added:
"The just shall rejoice in Yahweh and trust in Him:
And all the upright of heart shall praise Him."

PSALM LXV.

A THANKSGIVING ANTHEM.

To the Director, a Psalm (Mizmor), to David, a Song.
 Psalm 65 is composite, possibly the deliberate association of three poems, in three different metres, to form one grand thanksgiving ode. The first poem is a general *Song of Thanksgiving*, in two 4-lined pentameter strophes. The second is a *Song of the Harvest*, one 5-lined tetrameter strophe. The third is a *Song of the Flocks*, one 6-lined trimeter strophe. The rather numerous, but unimportant, glosses are noted below.

A.
Song of Thanksgiving.

I.

To Thee, O God, in Zion, a hymn is meet :

Yea, to Thee, in Jerusalem,¹ a vow, O Hearer of prayer.²

Happy they whom Thou choosest and bringest to dwell
 in Thy courts!

With the good of Thy house we are satisfied, the
 shrine of Thy palace.

II.

With wonders of justice Thou answerest us, God of
 our saving:³

Who, girded with might, by His power hath es-
 tablished the hills.

Still the tumult of ocean, of the billows their tu-
 mult:⁴

Making glad with Thy wonders the outgoings of
 morning and evening.

B.

Song of the Harvest.

Thou dost visit the earth and dost water it, yea, Thou
enrichest it:⁵

Full of water is the river of God.

Thou preparest the grain, even so Thou preparest it:

Its furrows to drench, its ridges to level:

With showers Thou meltest it,—Thou bledest its
growth.

C.

Song of the Flocks.

With Thy goodness the year Thou dost diadem:

And fatness Thy footsteps distill.

Yea, they distill—the meads of the wilderness:

And the hills⁶ gird themselves to rejoice.

The mountains are clothed with sheep:

And the valleys are covered with lambs.^{7 8}

1. So the versions. The addition "in Jerusalem" is justified by the needs of the parallelism.
2. A glossator has here inserted: "Unto Thee shall all flesh come." A still later scribe has added: "And iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, Thou shalt purge them away."
3. Here has been added: "The confidence of all the ends of the earth, and the sea of them afar off," whatever this last clause may mean. Peters renders it: "And of remotest isles."

4. Here again has been inserted a gloss; "and the tumult of the people" and "the dwellers in the extremities shall fear."
5. The adverb *rabbath* (*greatly*) is here to be omitted as making the line too long.
6. Read *hārim* (*mountains*) rather than *kārim* (*pastures*). It accords better with the parallelism.
7. Read *kārim* (*lambs*) rather than *bār* (*grain*).
8. The anthem is concluded by a *Praise-shout*, as suggested by the rubric:
"Let them shout: yea, let them sing."

PSALM LXVI.

A SONG OF PRAISE.

To the Director, a Song, a Psalm. Psalm 66 is an optimistic hymn evidently dating from a peaceful interlude of the post-exilic period. It consists of two parts, which seem as though they had been originally separate poems. A. (vv. 1-9) consists of five tetrastichs in trimeter; B. (vv. 10-20) of three heptastichs also in trimeter. Some take the first heptastich (10-15) as the interpolation of a glossator, but there seems no need to do this. One or two glosses, in the nature of liturgical ejaculations, are pointed out below.

A.

I.

Shout unto God, all the earth:

Harp to the glory of His Name!

Set forth the glory of His praise:

Say unto God: How fearful Thy working!

II.

Through Thy great strength cringe Thine enemies
unto Thee:

All the earth doeth Thee reverence.

Yea, unto Thee shall they harp:

They shall harp to Thy Name. (*Selah.*)

III.

Come ye and see the wonders of God:

His fearful work 'gainst the sons of men:

Who turned the sea into dry land:

And they passed through the river on foot.

IV.

There we rejoiced in Him:

Who by His power ruleth for ever.

His eyes watch over the nations:

Let not the adversaries exalt themselves. (*Selah.*)

V.

Bless ye our God, ye people:

Cause the voice of His praise to be heard:

Who keepeth our soul in life:

And gave not our feet to be moved!

B.

I.

¹For Thou, O God, hast tested us:

Thou hast tried us as silver is tried:

Thou broughtest us into the net:

Layedst trouble upon our loins:

Madest men to drive over our heads.

We went through fire and water:

But to a spacious place Thou didst bring us.

II.

I will enter Thy house with burnt-offerings:

I will pay unto Thee my vows:

Which I with my lips have expressed:

And I spake with my mouth in my trouble.

I will offer Thee fat burnt-offerings:

Together with incense of rams:

Bullocks together with he-goats. (*Selah.*)

III.

Come, hearken,² and I will recount
What He hath done for my soul.
To Him did I call with my mouth:
And high praise was under my tongue.
Verily, God did hearken:
He gave heed to the voice of my prayer:³
Nor turned away His love.

1. Briggs takes this heptastich as a strophe borrowed from a larger poem and added by an editor.
2. Omit the gloss: "all ye that fear God."
3. Omit the gloss—a liturgical ejaculation—: "Blessed be God Who did not reject my prayer."

PSALM LXVII.

FOR THE OFFERING OF FIRST-FRUITS.

To the Director, on Neginoth, a Psalm, a Song. Psalm 67 is a liturgy for the offering of the first-fruits. In its universalism it reminds us of the preceding psalm and of the second Isaiah. It belongs probably to the time following the Restoration when Judah lived on terms of friendliness with the surrounding peoples.

I.

(Priest.)

'May God be gracious and bless us:
May the light of His face shine among us! *(Selah.)*²

II.

(Choir.)

That Thy way may be known upon earth:
Among all the nations Thy victory.

III.

(Chorus.)

Let the peoples praise Thee, O God:
Let the peoples, all of them, praise Thee!

IV.

(Choir.)

Let the nations rejoice and be glad:
For Thou judgest the peoples with justice:
And dost govern the nations on earth. *(Selah.)*³

V.

(*Chorus.*)

Let the peoples praise Thee, O God:

Let the peoples, all of them, praise Thee!

VI.

(*Choir.*)

The earth hath yielded her increase:

God, even our God, hath blessed us:⁴

And all ends of the earth shall fear.⁵

1. The words of the priestly blessing. See Num. 6: 24.
2. At this point the sacrificial fire was kindled. Cf. the word "shine."
3. This *Selah* was the signal for the Praise-shout.
4. The repetition: "God shall bless us" is the error of a copyist.
5. The Hebrew word 'ōthō (*Him*) is unnecessary and makes the line too long.

PSALM LXVIII.

A HYMN OF TRIUMPH

To the Director, to David, a Psalm, a Song. One of the most beautiful, but, at the same time, perhaps the most difficult of all the psalms, both to translate and to arrange strophically. A number of small glosses have been introduced, making it impossible to be sure as to any suggested reconstruction. It is also impossible to be content with the text as it stands. At the close a Messianic prediction has been added, and lines making the whole poem suitable for public worship. The poem probably belongs to the late Persian period. The following transcription follows Briggs, with a few modifications.

I.

Let God arise; let His foes be scattered!
Let them that hate Him flee before Him!
As smoke is driven, so dost Thou drive:
As wax melteth before the fire,
The wicked perish from the presence of God:
But the righteous rejoice and with gladness exult.¹

II.

Sing ye to God; harp to His Name:
Extol Him who rideth the storm-clouds!²
Exult before Him, the Father of orphans,
Judge of widows, in His holy dwelling!
God, who maketh for the homeless a household:
Who bringeth prisoners into prosperity.³

III.

God, when Thou wentest before Thy people,
Earth quaked when through the desert Thou
marchedst.⁴

A copious rain Thou didst pour down, O God:
Didst re-establish Thy weary inheritance.
Thy living creatures shall dwell therein:
In Thy goodness for the poor Thou preparest it.

IV.

Thy word is given:⁵ women herald the war:
Kings of hosts do flee, do flee,
And the house-wife divideth the spoil:—
Wings of a dove covered with silver.⁶
When Shaddai scattered the kings thereon,
It snowed upon Salmon.

V.

O mount of God, O mount of Bashan!
O mount of summits, mount of Bashan!
Why envy ye, O mountains of summits,
The mount God desired for His throne?⁷
God's chariots are myriads, thousands on thousands:
The Lord came from Sinai unto His shrine.

VI.

Thou ascendest on high: makest captive the captives:
Receivest tribute from men, even rebels,
That there Yah Elohim might dwell,—
Even the God of our victories.⁸
Our God is a God Who saveth:
To Yahweh belongeth the issues of death.

VII.

Surely God will crush the head of His enemies:
 The hairy scalp of them that go on still in their
 guilt.⁹
 Saith the Lord: I will bring them from Bashan:
 I will bring them back from the depths of the sea:
 That thou mayest dip thy foot in the blood:
 The tongue of thy dogs have its share of the foe.

VIII.

They see Thy processions, O God, in the sanctuary:¹⁰
 Before go the singers: the minstrels come after:
 In the middle the maidens playing on timbrels.¹¹
 Little Benjamin is leading them on:
 There the princes of Judah, a throng of them:
 Princes of Zebulun, princes of Naphthali.

IX.

Put forth, O God, Thy strength!
 What Thou hast wrought for us do Thou confirm!¹²
 Rebuke the wild beast of the reeds:
 The herd of bulls, the calves of the people:
 Trampling them down that delight in silver:
 Scatter the peoples delighting in war!

(Messianic Addition.)

Out of Egypt princes shall come:
 Ethiopia stretch out her hands unto God.
 Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of earth!
 Make ye melody unto the Lord:
 To Him Who rideth the heavens of old!

Lo, He uttereth His voice, a voice of might :
Ascribe ye might unto God !
Over Israel is His majesty :
And His strength is in the clouds.
Terrible art Thou, God, from Thy shrine :
Unto Israel He giveth power :
And unto His people strength.
Blessed be God !

1. The text reads: "But the righteous rejoice: they triumph before God, and exult with great joy."
2. By a slight alteration of the text, we read "storm-clouds" instead of "desert steppes."
3. Omit the gloss: "But the rebellious dwell in parched lands."
4. A copyist has added, from Judges 5, the words: "And the heaven dropped before God" and he (or another) has made the reference explicit by adding further: "Yon Sinai before God, the God of Israel."
5. Instead of: "The Lord gave a word."
6. Omit the gloss of amplification: "Her pinions with glittering gold."
7. Omit the gloss: "Yea, the Lord dwelleth forever."
8. Omit the exclamatory gloss: "Blessed be the Lord that daily beareth our burden."
9. Or possibly: "The scalp of Seir."
10. Omit the gloss: "The processions of my God, my King."
11. Omit the gloss: "With choruses they are blessing God, the Lord from the fountain of Israel."
12. Omit the "O God"; also the gloss: "From Thy palace at Jerusalem, when kings bring Thee gifts."

II.

Let not them that wait on Thee be ashamed,
O Yahweh Sabaoth!³
Let not Thy seekers through me be disgraced,
O God of Israel!
In the greatness of Thy kindness O answer me:
In the truth of Thy salvation!
Rescue me from the mire that I sink not
In the deep waters!⁴
Let not the water-flood drown me:
Nor the depths swallow me!
And do not let close on me
The Pit her mouth!

III.

Answer me, Yahweh, for good is Thy kindness,
After Thy pity's abundance!⁵
And hide not Thy face from Thy servant:
Make haste in my strait!⁵
Draw near to my soul and redeem it,
Because of mine enemies!⁵
As for me, though in pain and afflicted,
Thy salvation shall raise me.⁶
So shall I praise God's Name with a song:
And magnify it with praise.
And that pleaseth Yahweh more than an ox:
Or a bullock with horns and hoofs.

*B.**An Imprecation.**I.*

For Thee I have borne reproach:
Shame hath covered my face.
A stranger was I to my brother:
To my mother's sons an alien.
For zeal of Thy house hath devoured me:
And on me fell Thy abusers' abuse.

II.

When I wept in the fast of my soul,
It became to me for reproach.
When I made my clothing sackcloth,
I became to them for a proverb.
They that sit in the gate make their talk of me:
I became the song of^r the wine-bibbers.^s

III.

Before Thee are all mine adversaries:
Reproach hath broken my heart,
One to pity I hoped for, and there was none:
And for companions and found none.
They gave me gall for my food:
And vinegar to drink for my thirst.

IV.

May their table be made a snare to them:
Yea, their peace-offerings a trap.
May their eyes be darkened from seeing:
And all the time tremble their loins.
Pour out upon them Thine anger:
And let Thy hot wrath overtake them.

V.

May their encampment become a waste:
 No dwellers within their tents.
 Add iniquity to their iniquity:
 And let them not come to Thy righteousness.
 From the book of life let them be blotted:
 Nor be written among the righteous.

C.

Liturgical Ending.

O ye humble, behold and be glad:
 Let your heart live, ye seekers of God!
 For Yahweh heareth the needy:
 And doth not despise His prisoners.
 Praise Him, ye heavens and earth:
 Seas and what moveth therein!
 For God saveth Zion:
 And buildeth the cities of Judah.⁹
 And His servants' arm doth inherit it:
 And the lovers of His Name dwell therein.

-
1. V. 3 is a gloss, out of harmony with the thought, out of measure, and making the strophe too long:
 "I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried:
 Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God."
 2. V. 5 also is a gloss, in a different measure:
 "O God, Thou knowest my foolishness:
 And my sins are not hid from Thee."
 3. Omit the word *'Adonai* (*Lord*).
 4. V. 14: "Let me be delivered from them that hate me," is a gloss.

5. In each of vv. 16, 17, and 18 an editor has added a verb to the second part of the pentameter line, in the effort to assimilate the measure to the trimeter of B. So we omit the words: "Turn unto me," "Answer me," "Ransom me."
6. In v. 29 omit the *'Elohim*.
7. Literally, *Neginoth* (*stringed instruments*).
8. V. 13a is a gloss: "But as for me, my prayer is unto Thee, O Yahweh, in an acceptable time."
9. Omit v. 35b: "And they shall abide there and have it in possession."

PSALM LXX.

A PRAYER.

To the Director, to David, to Bring to Remembrance.
Psalm 70 is, with slight verbal variations, the same as B. in 40—vv. 13-17. The textual indications are that it was originally a Yahwistic psalm incorporated in the reformation liturgy of 40. For the transcription, see that psalm.

PSALM LXXI.

A PRAYER.

Psalm 71 has no title in the Hebrew, but in the Greek is headed: *To David, of the sons of Jonadab and the first captives*. It is a prayer for national redemption, such as would be strikingly appropriate in that period of feebleness and misery between B.C. 597 and 586. The psalm begins with a quotation from 31 and there are many reminiscences of earlier poetry in the subsequent verses. Several long glosses have been added by an editor. These (vv. 10-13, 20-24) may easily be distinguished from the 7-lined strophes of the original poem. Shorter glosses are pointed out below.

I.

In Thee, Yahweh, have I taken refuge:
Let me not be shamed for ever.
Save me in Thy righteousness and deliver me:
Incline unto me Thine ear.¹
Be Thou to me the rock of my fortress:
A haven of defence to save me:²
For my crag and my fortress art Thou!

II.

Save me, God, from the hand of the wicked:
From the palm of ill-doer and violent.
For Thou, O Lord, art our hope:
Yahweh, my hope from my youth.
On Thee have I leaned from birth:
From my mother's womb Thou hast been my stay:
In Thee is my praise alway.

III.

Like a sign was I to many:

Since Thou wast my refuge and strength.

My mouth shall be full of Thy praise:

That I may sing of Thy glory:³

Of Thy beauty all the day long.

Cast me not off in the time of mine age:

When my strength faileth do not forsake me.⁴

IV.

And I—I will hope alway:

And add still more to Thy praise.

My mouth shall relate Thy righteousness:

Thy salvation all the day long.

For though I knew how to tell it,⁵

I should be to extremest of age

Mindful only, Yahweh, of Thy justice.

V.

From my youth until now Thou hast taught me:⁶

Even to age and gray hairs forsake me not:⁷

Till I tell the next age of Thine arm:

To all who shall come Thy mightiness.

Yea, in the height, O God, is Thy righteousness,—

The great things Thou hast accomplished.

O God, Who is like unto Thee?⁸

1. Omit "and save me."

2. Corrected by comparison with Psalm 31:2.

3. Line supplied by the Gk.

4. Verses 10-13 are a gloss, as follows:
 "For mine enemies speak against me:
 They that watch for my soul take counsel together:
 Saying, God hath abandoned him:
 Pursue him and catch him:
 For no one can save him.
 O God, be not far from me:
 My God, haste to my help!
 The adversaries of my soul shall be shamed and consumed:
 Wrapped in reproach and disgrace they who seek my undoing."
5. Read *lo* (*to it*) instead of *lo'* (*not*).
6. Omit "O God."
7. Omit "I will tell Thy wonders."
8. Verses 20-24 are a gloss, possibly by the same hand as 10-13:
 "O Thou Who hast showed us straits many and evil,
 Quicken us again.
 And from earth's depths raise us again;
 Increase my greatness:
 And comfort us again.

 I also will praise Thee on the lyre:
 Thy truth, O my God.
 I will harp to Thee with the harp,
 Thou Holy of Israel!
 My lips shall shout when I harp to thee:
 And my soul which Thou hast redeemed.

PSALM LXXII.

A CORONATION HYMN.

To Solomon. Though thus entitled (from the reference in v. 1), Psalm 72 was probably composed in the later time of the monarchy, perhaps at the coronation of a king like Josiah. At such a time the accession of a monarch stimulated hopes of an ideal ruler to usher in the glorious Messianic era. Thus the Messianic references, which some have imagined to be an editorial afterthought, need not be separated from the main body of the poem. Nevertheless, certain verses (10, 15, 16) must, for metrical reasons, be regarded as glosses of particularization. The last two verses (18, 19) form the doxology to Book II of the Psalter. The psalm seems to have been chosen deliberately to close the Davidic collections, just as Psalm 2 was selected to commence them.

I.

Give, O God, the king Thy judgments:

Thy righteousness unto the son of a king:

That he may judge Thy people with righteousness:

And Thine afflicted ones with judgment.

II.

May the mountains bring peace to the people:

And righteousness the hills!

May he govern the nation's afflicted:

And save the sons of the needy!¹

III.

May he lengthen his days with the sun:

Before the moon age after age!

Come down like the rain on the meadow:

Like showers that water the earth!

IV.

In his days may righteousness flourish:
 Peace abound till the moon be no more!
 May he rule from sea unto sea:
 From the River to the ends of the earth!

V.

Let the hostile crouch before him:
 And his enemies lick the dust!²
 And may all kings worship before him:
 All nations do him service!

VI.

For he rescueth the poor when he crieth:
 Yea, the humble and him with no helper.
 On the feeble and poor he taketh pity:
 And the souls of the poor he saveth.

VII.

From oppression and violence he ransometh their soul:
 Their blood in his eyes is precious.³
 May all men pray for him always:
 May they bless him all the day long!⁴

VIII.

May his name endure for ever:
 Before the sun be he stablished!⁵
 May men in him become blessed:
 May all nations call him happy!

i. V. 4c is a gloss, added by one who desired to introduce a vindictive touch:

“And will break in pieces the oppressor.”

2. V. 10 is a gloss of particularization: "Kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring tribute: kings of Sheba and Saba bring gifts."
 3. V. 15 has a similar gloss, doubtless from the same hand: "So may he live and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba."
 4. V. 16 is a gloss, differing in measure from the rest of the poem:
"May there be plenty of grain in the land:
On the mountain top may his fruit shake like Lebanon:
May they from the city bloom like grass of the earth."
 5. In v. 17 omit "his name."
-

Doxology to Book II.

Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Israel:

Who alone doeth wonders!

And blessed the Name of His glory for ever!

All the earth shall be filled with His glory!

Amen and Amen.

(The Prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended.)

BOOK III.

LXXIII-LXXXIX.

THE DIVISION of the Psalter into five books, in order to provide readings for a three-year course in the synagogues, was (as we have seen) late and artificial. Book III would naturally have included the Korahitic and Asaphic psalms 42-50, but between these and 73ff. have been interpolated the psalms of the second Davidic collection.

As the text stands, Book III includes four Korahitic psalms (84, 85, 87, 89) and eleven Asaphic psalms (73-83). These have the characteristics made familiar to us in the earlier examples. Psalm 86 is, for some reason or other, entitled a Prayer of David; 88 is (in addition to its Korahitic designation) called a Maskil of Heman the Ezrahite; and 89 is called a Maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite. There are four *Maskils* in the book (74, 78, 88, 89). Seven psalms (75, 76, 77, 80, 81, 84, 85) are entitled "To the Director"; twelve are called *Mizmor* (*Psalm*); and five are called *Song* (*Shir*). The first eleven psalms of the collection (73-83) are (like those of Book II) Elohist.

PSALM LXXIII.

THE PROBLEM OF PROSPERITY.

A Psalm, to Asaph. In line with the Book of Job, Psalm 73 gives the experience of one who contrasts his own afflicted condition with the prosperity of the wicked. In the end "he finds his consolation in the divine guidance in life and a hope of glory after death" (Briggs). V. 1 is evidently the caption of the poem, or possibly a gloss prefixed by an editor anxious to anticipate the conclusions of pious experience. The poem itself is divided into two equal parts, each of five trimeter tetrastichs. Several glosses have been added by later editors who desired to suggest solutions for the problem proposed (vv. 10, 17-20, 27-28). The psalm is probably the outcome of conditions existing in the Greek period. In early Christian communities it was used as a hymn for morning worship.

Truly God to Israel is good:
To the pure in heart.

A.

I.

As for me, my feet were well-nigh gone:
My steps had almost slipped.
For I was envious of the boasters:¹
I saw the repose of the wicked.

II.

For they have no pangs:
And sound is their strength.
In the trouble of men they share not:
Not as mankind are they plagued.

III.

Therefore is pride their necklace:

They are clothed with a mantle of violence.

Their eye goeth out from the fat:

Conceits from the heart overflow.

IV.

They mock and talk about evil:

From on high they speak of oppression.

They have set their mouth in the heavens:

And their tongue walketh the earth.²

V.

"How can 'El know?" say they:

"And is there knowledge with 'Elyon?"

Lo, such as these are the wicked:

Ever prosperous, increasing in wealth.

B.

I.

Surely in vain have I cleansed my heart:

And washed my palms in innocency;

That all day long am I plagued:

And every morning chastened.

II.

Had I said: "I will tell it thus!"

Lo, Thy sons' generation I had betrayed.

But when I thought to understand it,

Painful it was in mine eyes.³

III.

For my heart was embittered:
 And in my reins I was pricked.
 Yet stupid was I and ignorant:
 A beast was I toward Thee.

IV.

But always am I with Thee:
 By my right hand Thou holdest me.
 With Thy counsel Thou dost guide me:
 And after to glory Thou bringest me.

V.

Whom have I in the heavens?
 And on earth I desire nought beside Thee:—
 When my heart and my flesh shall fail,
 My rock and my portion for ever.⁴

-
1. Literally "those who sing hallels."
 2. V. 10 is a marginal note of consolation: "Therefore will He bring back His people hither when the fullness of their days is found."
 3. Vv. 17-20 are a gloss inserted by a later editor who found a solution for the problem in the certain punishment of the wicked on earth, a position not unlike that taken by the friends of Job.
 "Until I came to the shrine of El:
 And perceived their future lot.
 Surely in slippery places Thou settest them:
 Thou dost hurl them to ruin.
 How are they laid waste in a moment:
 Swept away and consumed with terrors!
 Like a dream, when Thou wakenest, Lord,
 In the city Thou despisest their image.

This last line has been sometimes explained as a reference to the image of Zeus set up in the Temple by Antiochus Epiphanes.

4. Vv. 27-28 are a final gloss, added probably by the same hand. They contrast the sure destruction of the wicked with the prosperity of the righteous:

"For, lo, those far off from Thee perish:

All who are faithless to Thee Thou destroyest.

And I—the nearness of God is my good:

I have made the Lord Yahweh my fortress,

To tell about all Thy works.

PSALM LXXIV.

IN TIME OF PERSECUTION.

A Maskil, to Asaph. Psalm 74 shows signs of having been worked over to suit several times of national crisis. The original reference was probably to the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, but a Maccabean editor found much that was appropriate to his own time and added verses to make it more so. These glosses are pointed out below. We are probably right in arranging the poem in three parts, each of three trimeter tetrastichs.

I.

1. Why, God, hast Thou cast us off for ever?
 Why smoketh Thy wrath 'gainst the sheep of
 Thy pasture?
 Remember Thy community purchased of old:¹
 Mount Zion wherein Thou didst dwell.²
2. The foe hath marred all in the sanctuary:
 Thine adversaries roared in the midst of the as-
 sembly.³
 Thy sanctuary did they set on fire.
 The home of Thy Name they profaned to the
 ground.
3. They said in their heart: "Let us utterly destroy
 them!"
 So they burned all the assemblies of God in the
 land.
 Our standards we do not see:⁴
 And no one among us knoweth how long.⁵

II.

1. How long, O God, shall the adversary reproach?
Shall the enemy for ever despise Thy Name?
Wherefore dost Thou withdraw Thy hand?
And keepest Thy right hand within Thy bosom?⁶
2. Thou didst divide the sea by Thy power:
Thou crushedst the dragons' heads on the deep.⁷
Thou didst cleave out fountain and brook:
The unfailing rivers Thou didst dry up.
3. Thine is the day and Thine the night:
Thou dost establish the light and the sun.
Thou hast ordained all the borders of earth:
Summer and winter Thou didst form.

III.

1. Remember this, how the foe reproacheth:
A foolish people despising Thy Name.
Give not the beasts the soul of Thy turtle-dove:
The life of Thy humble one forget not for ever.
2. Consider the fat ones,⁸ for they are filled:
The earth's dark places are dwellings of violence.
Let not the crushed ones be again put to shame:
Let the humble and needy give praise to Thy
Name.
3. Arise, O God, plead Thou my cause!
Remember Thy reproach from the fool all the
day!
Forget not the voice of Thine adversaries:
The roar of Thy foes arising continually.

1. In v. 2 omit the gloss: "Which Thou hast redeemed to be the tribe of Thine inheritance."
2. Omit the gloss in v. 3: "Which Thy footsteps exalted to eternal dignity."
3. In vv. 4-6 omit:
 "They set up their own signs as signs:
 It seemed like one who wieldeth on high axes in the
 thicket of trees.
 So now its carved work with hatchets and axes they
 smash."
4. In v. 9 omit: "There is no more any prophet."
5. Peters translates: "There is no one who knows a 'How long'! i.e., 'no more psalmist in the land.'"
6. Omit v. 12:
 "And God is my King of old:
 Who worketh salvation in the midst of the earth."
7. Omit v. 14:
 "Thou didst cleave the head of Leviathan:
 Thou didst give him to be food to the beasts of the
 desert."
8. In v. 20 read *br'oth* (*fat ones*) instead of *brith* (*covenant*).

PSALM LXXV.

A VINTAGE HYMN.

To the Director, upon Tashith ('Al-Tashith), a Psalm, to Asaph, a Song. Psalm 75 is of uncertain date, but apparently ancient. Some regard it as pre-exilic. The *upon Tashith (on Destroy)* suggests that it may have been used as a vintage song in which the treading down of the grapes was a dramatization of the trampling down of the foes whose destruction they desired. The poem shows reminiscence of the Song of Hannah in I Sam. 2.

I.

We give thanks unto Thee, O God:

We give thanks (unto Thee, O God).¹

They who call² upon Thy Name,—

They tell of Thy wondrous works.

“Though (saith God) I take My time:

Righteously do I judge.

Earth melteth away and³ her dwellers:

I bear up the pillars thereof.

(*Selah.*)

II.

“I say to the boasters:⁴ Boast not!

To the wicked: Lift not your horn!

Lift not on high your horn!

Speak not proudly against the Rock!”⁵

For not from the East or the West:

Not from the Steppe or the Mountains:

But from God—He is the judge:

He casteth down and upraiseth.

III.

For in Yahweh's hand is a cup:
 And the wine is foaming and spiced.⁶
 He poureth forth of its lees:
 And the wicked shall drain them and drink them.

As for me—I will tell out for ever:
 I will harp to the God of Jacob.
 I will hew off the horns of the wicked:
 Lifted up be the horns of the righteous.

-
1. The repetition "unto Thee, O God" has to be supplied to keep the parallelism. The words were probably dropped by a copyist.
 2. The Hebrew text has "is near," but the alteration of a single letter gives the rendering as above.
 3. Omit the *kol* (*all*) as making the line too long, as again in vv. 8 and 10.
 4. Literally "the utterers of *hallel*s."
 5. Cf. the Gk. *κατὰ τοῦ θεοῦ*. Read *tzûr* instead of *tzavv'ar*. For the Rock as a Divine Name see I Sam. 2:3 and Deut. 32:2-3.
 6. Literally "full of mixture." Cf. Prov. 23:30.

PSALM LXXVI.

GOD THE TERRIBLE.

To the Director, on Neginoth, a Psalm, to Asaph, a Song.
 Psalm 76, set to stringed instruments, celebrates some ancient victory over the enemies of Israel, possibly the deliverance from Sennacherib. Of the four trimeter hexastichs which make up the poem, the last is perhaps a late gloss, added by an editor to give the whole psalm a liturgical character.

I.

Renowned in Judah is God:
 In Israel great is His Name.
 At Salem is His covert:¹
 And His abode in Zion.
 There He shivered the shafts² of the bow:
 The shield, the sword and the battle.

II.

Splendid art Thou, O God:³
 Glorious from hills eternal.⁴
⁵The stout-hearted slept their sleep:
 The warriors found not their hands.
 O God of Jacob, at Thy rebuking,
 They slumbered, both chariot and horse.

III.

Thou, O terrible art Thou:⁶
 And who may stand in Thy presence?⁷
 From heaven Thou soundest the sentence:
 The earth feared and was silent:
 When God rose up unto judgment:
 To save all the poor of the land.

.

IV.

For the violence of man is Thy praise:

The remnant of wrath puts on sackcloth.

Vow ye and pay to your God:

All around Him bring gifts to the Terrible One.

For He cuts off the courage^s of princes:

To the kings of the earth He is terrible.

1. Literally "a covert" (from the root *sākak*, to interlace).
2. The word *resheph* (*a flash*) suggests arrows of fire.
3. The *'Elohim* must be supplied to complete the measure.
4. Cf. the Gk. *αιωνιον*, which suggests "eternal" rather than "hills of prey."
5. The Aramaean *'eth toll'u* is an evident gloss and must be omitted.
6. Instead of the double *'attah* (*Thou*), Briggs suggests "O God."
7. The explanatory gloss "from the time of Thine anger" is omitted.
8. The word *ruah* (*spirit*) is here best rendered as "courage."

PSALM LXXVII.

A COMPOSITE PSALM.

To the Director, upon Jeduthun, a Psalm, to Asaph.
 Psalm 77 is composite, consisting of A. (vv. 1-16) a memorial before God (doubtless of the time of the Exile) of all God's wondrous works in times past; and B. (vv. 16-19) a theophanic poem of later date inserted to illustrate the divine deliverance of Israel. To this has been added a liturgical couplet (v. 20). The whole poem strongly resembles the other Asaphic psalms and particularly Psalm 78.

A.

A Memorial.

I.

With my voice unto God will I cry:¹
 In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord:
 My hand in the night is outstretched ceaselessly.
 My soul refuseth consolation:
 O God, when I remember I groan:
 I muse and my spirit doth faint.

II.

Thou holdest the lids of mine eyes:
 I am restless and cannot speak:
 I muse on the days of old:
 I recall the years of the past:
 I make melody at night in my heart:
 I muse and search out my spirit.

III.

Will the Lord cast off for ever?
 Will He never again show favor?
 Is His love clean gone for ever?
 Hath His word ceased for the ages?
 Hath God forgotten graciousness?
 Hath He shut up His pity in wrath?

IV.

Then I said: This is my trouble:
 That the right hand of 'Elyon² hath changed!
 Let me recall the workings of Yah:
 For of old I remember His doings.
 On all Thy work will I ponder:
 And on Thy doings will meditate.

V.

O God, Thy way is in holiness.
 What God is so great as Elohim?
 Thou art the God doing wonders:
 Making known through the nations Thy strength.
 With Thine arm Thou didst ransom Thy people:
 The sons of Jacob and Joseph.

B.

A Theophany.

I.

The waters saw Thee, O God:
 The waters saw Thee—they writhed:
 The deeps were convulsed.

II.

The clouds poured out water:
The skies gave their voice:
Thine arrows went hither and thither.

III.

Thy thunder's voice was in the whirlwind:
The lightnings illumined the world:
The earth trembled and quaked.

IV.

In the seas was Thy way:
And Thy paths in great waters:
And Thy footsteps were not known.

(Liturgical Ending.)

Thou leddest Thy people like sheep
By the hand of Moses and Aaron.

1. In v. 1 the line:

"My voice unto God that He hear me," is the repetition of a copyist who desired to make the first two lines parallel.

2. Note that the psalmist uses four Divine Names: 'Adonai (Lord), 'El (God), 'Elyon (Most High), and Yah.

PSALM LXXVIII.

GOD IN HISTORY.

A Maskil, to Asaph. Psalm 78 has many points of resemblance to the other Asaphic psalms and the term *Maskil*, or meditative poem, is clearly appropriate. It was probably written in early Persian times and surveys the history of the chosen people from the time of the sojourn in Egypt till the establishment of the kingdom of David. The lessons drawn are those familiar to us from the book of Deuteronomy. It is quite likely, as Briggs maintains, that there are many glosses, but some of those he adduces as such are not certainly so. In the following transcription only such brief additions to the original have been excluded as are plainly in conflict with the metrical structure. The poem is written throughout in trimeter tetrastichs, but there is no recognizable division into strophes.

I.

Hear My law, O My people:

Incline your ear to the words of My mouth.

I will open My mouth in a parable:

I will utter riddles from days of old.

II.

What we have heard and known:

That which our fathers told us:

We will not conceal from their sons:

To the next generation telling it.¹

III.

How He laid upon Jacob a charge:

And appointed for Israel a law:

Which He commanded our fathers

Unto their children to teach.

IV.

That the coming ages might know:
Children unborn shall arise,
And unto their children recount them:
And set upon God their confidence.

V.

That they should not forget God's works:
But His commandments should keep:
And not to be like their fathers,
A rebellious and obstinate race.

VI.

A race that stablished not its heart:
Whose spirit to 'El was not loyal.
Like Ephraim's sons, archers armed with bows,
Turned back in the day of battle.

VII.

They kept not the covenant of God:
In His law they refused to walk;
And they forgot His doings:
His wonders which He had showed them.

VIII.

Wonders He did in the sight of their fathers:
In Egypt's land, in the field of Zoan.
The sea He divided and made them pass over:
Made the waters to stand like a wall.

IX.

He guided them by day with a cloud:
All night through with the light of fire.

He clave the hard rocks in the wilderness:
 And, as from the depths, gave them drink in abundance.

X.

And He brought forth streams from the crag:
 And made water run down like the rivers.
 But they sinned still more against Him,
 Rebelling against 'El in the desert.

XI.

And they tempted 'El in their hearts,
 By demanding food for their souls.
 They spake against God and said:
 "Can 'El spread a table in the wilderness?"

XII.

"Lo, He smote the rock and waters flowed out:
 Yea, and the streams poured forth;
 Can He also give bread?
 Or flesh provide for His people?"

XIII.

So Yahweh heard and was angry:
 And fire blazed forth upon Jacob.²
 For they were not loyal to God:
 They trusted not His salvation.

XIV.

So He commanded the skies from above:
 And opened the doors of heaven:
 Rained manna upon them for food:
 And gave them the grain of heaven.

XV.

So man ate the bread of the mighty:
Game He sent them in plenty.
He let loose the east wind in the heavens:
And guided the south wind with His power.

XVI.

He rained flesh upon them like dust:
Feathered fowl like the sand of the seas;
In the midst of the camp He dropped them:
Round about their habitations.

XVII.

And they ate and were sated exceedingly:
That which they craved for He brought them.
They were not yet done with their craving:
The food was still in their mouths.

XVIII.

Then the anger of God rose against them:
And the lustiest of them He slew.
· · · · ·
And cut off the choicest of Israel.

XIX.

In all this they kept on sinning:
And did not believe His wonders.
So He ended their days in a breath:
And their years in a ruin.

XX.

Then, when He smote them, they sought Him:
And enquired again of 'El.

And remembered that God was their Rock:
And 'El 'Elyon their Redeemer.

XXI.

But with their mouth they deceived Him:
And lied unto Him with their tongue;
Their heart was not stedfast with Him:
They were not true to His covenant.

XXII.

But He was compassionate (and gracious):
He pardoneth guilt and destroyeth not.
Yea, oft He turned backward His wrath:
Nor all His anger aroused.

XXIII.

He remembered that they were flesh:
Wind that passeth and cometh not back:
As oft they rebelled in the wilderness:
And grieved Him in the desert.

XXIV.

And they tried 'El again and again:
And grieved the Holy of Israel.
They did not remember His hand:
The day from the foe He redeemed them.

XXV.

How He ordained His wonders in Egypt:
His signs in the field of Zoan;
And turned into blood their rivers:
That they could not drink of their streams.

XXVI.

And He sent forth insects among them:
And frogs which destroyed them;
And gave to the caterpillar their increase:
And the fruit of their toil to the locust.

XXVII.

He destroyed their vines with hail-stones:
And their sycamores with frost;
And gave to the plague⁵ their cattle:
And their flocks to the pestilence.

XXVIII.

He sent His hot anger among them:
Fury and wrath and distress;⁶
And He smote all the first-born of Egypt:
In Ham's tents the firstlings of manhood.

XXIX.

But the people He led forth like sheep:
In the waste, like a flock, He guided them.
Without fear, in safety, He led them:
But the sea overwhelmed their foes.

XXX.

To His holy border He brought them:
That mountain His right hand had won;
And drove out before them the nations:
And assigned them by lot an inheritance.⁷

XXXI.

But they tried God and vexed 'Elyon:
And did not observe His injunctions:

Like their fathers drew back and turned traitors:
Turned aside like a broken bow.

XXXII.

And they grieved Him with their high places:
With their idols they made Him jealous.
God heard and He became furious:
And cast off Israel utterly.

XXXIII.

He abandoned the shrine of Shiloh:
The tent where He dwelt with man;
He gave His strength to captivity:
To the hand of the foe His splendor.^a

XXXIV.

His young men the fire devoured:
No bridal songs had His maidens:
His priests were slain with the sword:
And His widows made no lament.

XXXV.

Then the Lord awoke as from sleep:
Like a warrior excited with wine;
And He smote His enemies backward:
He gave them eternal disgrace.

XXXVI.

He rejected the tent of Joseph:
And chose not the tribe of Ephraim;
But the tribe of Judah He chose:
Mount Zion, which He hath loved.

XXXVII.

And He built like the heights His sanctuary:
 Like the earth established for ever;
 And He chose out David His servant:
 And took him out from the sheepfolds.

XXXVIII.

From behind the ewes He brought him:
 To shepherd Jacob, His people;⁹
 And with all his heart he shepherded them:
 Gave them rest by the skill of his hands.

1. In v. 4 omit the gloss of amplification: "the praise of Yahweh, and His might and His wonders which He wrought."
2. In v. 21 omit: "and wrath mounted against Israel."
3. In v. 31 a line is missing. This is clear both from the defective parallelism and from the imperfect form of the tetrastich.
4. In v. 38 the words "and gracious" are supplied, to give the third tone of the trimeter verse.
5. In v. 48 read *dabar* (plague) instead of *barad* (hail), as more suitable to the sense and the parallelism.
6. In vv. 49-50 omit the gloss of amplification:
 "A sending of angels of evil.
 He levelled a path for His anger:
 He spared not their soul from death:
 But gave over their life to the plague."
7. In v. 55 omit: "And made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents."
8. In v. 62 omit: "He delivered His people to the sword:
 And was furious with His inheritance."
9. In v. 71 omit: "and Israel His heritage."

PSALM LXXIX.

LAMENT FOR THE TEMPLE

A Psalm, to Asaph. Psalm 79 is really a lament for the destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar and a complaint before God because of the low estate of Israel. It was prescribed by rabbinical usage for the commemoration of this disaster and is still used in the Friday lamentation at the Wailing Place in Jerusalem. A Maccabean gloss (vv. 10b-12) and a liturgical ending (v. 13) have been added. But there is so much reminiscence of other psalms throughout that it is difficult to be certain of the original form. The following transcription is provisional.

I.

O God, the nations have entered Thy heritage:
Thy holy shrine they defiled:
They have laid in ruins Jerusalem.
They have given Thy servants' dead bodies
As food for the fowls of heaven:
The flesh of Thy saints¹ for the beasts of the land.

II.

Their blood they poured out like water
On every side of Jerusalem:
And there was no man to bury them.
We became a reproach to our neighbors:
A scorn and a mockery
To those round about us.

III.

How long!² God, art Thou angry for ever?
Doth Thy jealousy burn like fire?

Pour out Thy wrath on the nations who know Thee not:
 On the kingdoms which name not Thy Name.
 For Jacob they have devoured:
 And his dwelling-place laid waste.

IV.

Recall not our sins of old time!
 May Thy mercies speedily meet us!
 God of our salvation, O help us,
 Because of Thy glorious Name!
 For Thy Name's sake, deliver and cover our sins!
 Why say the nations: Where is their God?

(Maccabean Addition.)

Let there be known before our eyes among the nations
 The avenging of Thy servants' blood which was
 shed.

Let the sighing of the captives come before Thee:
 By Thy strong right hand preserve those doomed to
 die:

And requite in the bosom of our neighbors sevenfold
 The reproach wherewith they, O Lord, reproach
 Thee.

(Liturgical Ending.)

And we, Thy people, and sheep of Thy pasture,
 Will give Thee thanks for ever.
 From generation to generation
 We will recount Thy praise.

1. Literally, the *hasidim*, or *pious ones*.

2. The "How long!" is the familiar protest of the old Babylonian psalms.

3. Omit the gloss: "for we are brought very low."

PSALM LXXX.

PRAYER FOR RESTORATION.

To the Director, upon Shoshannim-Eduth, to Asaph, a Psalm. The Gk. adds: *On account of the Assyrian.* This suggests that the poem was originally an appeal to Yahweh Sabaoth by the tribes of Northern Israel for deliverance from the hand of the Assyrian conquerors. Some, however, reject this northern origin of the psalm and suppose it to have been written in Babylonia after the destruction of Jerusalem. In any case the point of view is northern rather than southern. A Maccabean editor has added (v. 16) a petition suitable to the circumstances of his own time. Each of the five 6-lined stanzas originally ended with a refrain which was in all probability a kind of Praise-shout accompanying (after the manner of imitative magic) the revival of the flame upon the altar. In our present text this refrain is only complete after the first, second, and last strophes.

I.

Shepherd of Israel, give ear!
 Leader of Joseph¹ as a flock,
 Throned on the cherubs, shine forth!
 In the presence of Ephraim² and Manasseh,
 Rouse up Thy warrior might,
 And come for salvation to us.
 Yahweh³ Sabaoth, restore us:
 Let Thy face shine that we may be saved!

II.

Yahweh⁴ Sabaoth, how long
 Dost Thou smoke at the prayer of Thy people?
 With the bread of tears hast Thou fed them:
 Thou hast made them drink tears by buckets⁵ full.

Thou hast made us a butt to our neighbors:
And our enemies laugh us to scorn.
Yahweh Sabaoth, restore us:
Let Thy face shine that we may be saved!

III.

A Vine⁶ out of Egypt Thou broughtest:
Thou expelledst the nations and plantedst it.
Thou didst clear out a place before it:
It took roots and spread over the land.
The mountains were wrapped in its shadow:
And the cedars of God in its branches.
 ⁷(Yahweh Sabaoth, restore us:
 Let Thy face shine that we may be saved!)

IV.

She sent out her boughs to the Sea:⁸
And unto the River⁹ her tendrils.
Why then hast Thou torn down her fences,
So that all who pass by strip her bare?
The boar from the forest¹⁰ devoureth her:
And the beasts of the field feed upon her.
Yahweh Sabaoth, restore us:
 ¹¹(Let Thy face shine that we may be saved!)

V.

Look down from the heavens and see:
(Look down) and visit this vine:
The plant Thy right hand hath planted:¹²
The son Thou madest strong for Thyself!

And we—we will not go back from Thee:
 Quicken us, for on Thee do we call!

Yahweh Sabaoth, restore us:

Let Thy face shine that we may be saved!

1. The references to Israel, Joseph, Ephraim, Manasseh, show that the northern tribes are particularly in the psalmist's mind.
2. Omit *Benjamin* as spoiling the measure. It is probably the gloss of a late editor who desired the southern tribes also to be represented.
3. The original *Yahweh* has here, as in several other places in the poem, been displaced by a later *Elohim*.
4. Omit the *Elohim* as making the line too long.
5. The text is here doubtful. Briggs renders it: "a measure of wormwood."
6. Cf. the allegory of Is. 5: 1-7.
7. The refrain has been omitted at the close of this strophe.
8. I. e. the Mediterranean.
9. I. e. the Euphrates.
10. The word *ya'ar* (*forest*) is possibly *ya'ar* (*river*—the Nile). In this case the reference is to Egypt as that of the next line is to the Philistines.
11. The second line of the refrain is missing in the text.
12. A Maccabean editor has here inserted the gloss:
 "She is burned with fire, cut off;
 At the rebuke of Thy face they perish."

PSALM LXXXI.

• A FESTIVAL HYMN.

To the Director, upon Gittith, to Asaph. Psalm 81 is plainly a hymn for one of the great festivals, probably the Feast of Tabernacles. Some regard the poem as composite, with the Divine speech of vv. 6-9 as one element. But the various elements (if such they be) are so harmoniously blended into a unity that we are well warranted in transcribing the poem as one. V. 10, however, is a manifest gloss, suggested by the reference to the first two Commandments of the Decalogue in the preceding verse.

I.

Cry aloud unto God, my strength:
 Shout unto Jacob's God!
 Make melody and sound the drum:
 The merry harp with the lute.

II.

For the new moon sound the horn:
 The full moon is our festival.
 This was a statute for Israel:
 A judgment from Jacob's God.

III.

Testimonies He set for Joseph:
 When He went forth¹ from Egypt's land,
 I heard a tongue which I knew not: (saying)
 "I will take from the burden his shoulder:

IV.

"His hands shall go free from the basket.²
In distress thou didst call and I rescued thee:
In the thunder-covert I answered thee:
At the waters of strife I tested thee.

V.

"Hear, while I warn thee, my people:
If thou wouldest hear me, O Israel,
There shall no strange god be within thee:
Nor a foreign god shalt thou worship.³

VI.

"But My people would not hear My voice:
And Israel would have none of Me:
So I gave them up to the lusts of their heart;
They walked in their own imaginings.

VII.

"O that My people would hearken to Me:
That Israel would walk in My ways!
Soon would I have humbled their enemies:
And turned My hand on their adversaries."

* * *

VIII.

'Let the haters of Yahweh come cringing to Him:
But may their⁵ time endure for ever!
He would give them to eat of the fatness of wheat:
And with honey from the rock would He⁶ satisfy
them.

1. So the versions. The Hebrew has "went out over."
2. This is a reference to the common method (still employed in the East) of carrying earth and building materials in baskets.
3. Here has been introduced the gloss:
 "I am Yahweh, thy God,
 Who brought thee out of the land of Egypt.
 Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it."
4. This last quatrain has been regarded by some as a late editorial addition.
5. I. e. Israel. Cf. Deut. 32: 13-14.
6. So the versions. But the Hebrew has: "I will satisfy thee."
 Some have changed the former clause also to the 1st.
 Pers. and have thus made the whole quatrain part of
 the Divine speech.

PSALM LXXXII.

GOD TO THE GENTILE RULERS.

A Psalm, to Asaph. The God of Israel is represented very dramatically as presiding in the council of gods, identified with the rulers of the surrounding peoples. These are rebuked and threatened with destruction. The poem contains three tetrastichs, interrupted by a gloss (v. 5) and closed by a liturgical formula, or Praise-shout (v. 8).

I.

God standeth in the council of 'Elim:¹

In the midst of the gods He is judge: (saying)

"How long will ye judge unjustly:

And favor the face of the wicked? (*Selah.*)"

II.

"Judge ye the poor and the orphan:

Right the afflicted and needy.

Rescue the weak and the wretched:

From the hand of the wicked deliver them.³

III.

"I say: Though ye are gods:

And the sons of 'Elyon all of ye:

Yet ye⁴ shall die like men:

And like one of the princes fall."

(*Praise-shout.*)

Arise, God, judge Thou the earth:

For Thou shalt possess all the nations!

1. The use of the plural here follows the Gk.
2. Possibly the *Praise-shout* was raised after each of the strophes.
3. Here a glossator has interpolated a comment which was meant to mark his sense of the disorder of the times:
 "They know not nor do they understand:
 In the darkness they walk about:
 All the pillars of the earth are shaken."
4. Read 'atten (*ye*) instead of the adverbial asseveration 'ākēn.

PSALM LXXXIII.

THE CONSPIRATORS.

A Song, a Psalm, to Asaph. It is not clear why Psalm 83 is called a *Song*. It is a fervid and impassioned plea against the success of a combination of hostile tribes, the names of which may have been altered to suit the circumstances. If we admit that "Ashur" really refers to the Samaritans of the time of Nehemiah, the psalm would suit that period extremely well. A later editor, with some touch of the universalistic spirit, has introduced a gloss or two at the close. The glosses are easily separable from the original poem, which is one of great structural beauty. Of the four trimeter octastichs of which the psalm consists the first pair are in striking antithesis to the last. The *Selah* at the end of v. 8 should probably be repeated, as an indication of place for a *Praise-shout* at the end of each strophe.

I.

O God, keep not Thou silent :
 'El, be not still, be not quiet !
 For, behold, Thy foes are in uproar :
 And Thy haters lift up the head.
 They combine against Thy people :
 And conspire against Thy hidden ones :
 "Come, let us destroy them from being a people :
 That Israel's name be no more remembered."

II.

For with one heart they conspire :
 Against Thee they make alliance.
 The tents of Edom and Ishmaelites :
 Moab and the Hagarenes :

Gebal and Ammon and Amalek:

Philistia with the people of Tyre.

Ashur also is joined with them:

They are the arm² of the sons of Lot. (*Selah.*)

III.

Deal Thou with them as with³ Sisera:

As with Jabin at Kishon's brook:

Who were destroyed at Endor:

They became dung for the ground.

Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb:

Like Zebah and Zalmunna their princes:

Who said: "Let us seize for ourselves

The dwelling-places of God."

IV.

O my God, turn them into a whirl:⁴

Like the stubble before the wind:

Like a fire that burneth the forest:

Like a flame that kindleth the mountains.

So with Thy whirlwind pursue them:

And with Thy tempest affright them.

Fill their faces with shame:⁵

Let them be shamed and perish for ever.⁶

1. Note the possibility of the translation "Thy northerners," especially in connection with the theory of an Assyrian date.

2. That is an *arm* to which all the other tribes were *fingers*.

3. Omit "Midian" as a gloss of amplification,

4. That is, in all probability, a species of *tumbleweed*, whose seeds in the wind were blown like wheels across the desert.
5. To which an editor has added: "That they may seek Thy Name, Yahweh." The same hand, in all probability, has added the verse:
"And they shall know that it is Thou alone, Yahweh,
Who art Most High over all the earth."
6. Here is introduced a gloss of amplification, reminiscent of other psalms:
"Let them be confounded; let them perish."
It is possible that this was used as a *Praise-shout*.

PSALM LXXXIV.

THE JOY OF THE SANCTUARY.

To the Director, upon Gittith, a Psalm, to the sons of Korah. Psalm 84 is a pilgrim song, expressing the longing of the soul for access to the sanctuary at Jerusalem. It is perhaps by the same author as Psalm 42-43, which it much resembles in structure as well as in sentiment. From the reference to the king as "our shield" and "Thine anointed," it seems probable that the psalm belongs to the time of the monarchy. Perhaps the author was one of the first batch of exiles deported in B.C. 597, with Ezekiel. The construction is rather irregular, but (with several lines missing) the poem consists of three pentameter hexastichs. The occurrence of the *Selah* does not seem to coincide with the strophical arrangement.

I.

O how lovely Thy tabernacles,
 Yahweh Sabaoth!
 Pale is my soul and pining,
 For Yahweh's courts.
 My heart and my flesh shout to God,
 The God of my life.
 Yea, the birds have found a house,
 ¹
 And the swallow a nest for her,
 Where she layeth her young;—
 At Thine altars, O Yahweh Sabaoth,
 My King and my God!

II.

Happy are they who dwell in Thy house:
 For ever they praise Thee. (*Selah.*)

Happy the man whose strength is in Thee:
 In whose heart are the highways!
 They who pass through the Valley of Weeping
 A place of springs make it.
 With blessings the early rain clotheth it:

.²

From rampart to rampart they go:
 El Elohim in Zion is seen.
 Yahweh Sabaoth, hear my prayer:
 Hearken, O God of Jacob! (*Selah.*)

III.

O God, consider our Shield:³
 Look on the face of Thine Anointed!
 For better one day in Thy courts⁴
 Than a thousand elsewhere.
 I choose in God's house to lie on the threshold,
 Than to dwell in the tents of the wicked.
 For a Sun and a Shield is Yahweh Sabaoth:
 Grace and glory giveth Yahweh.
 Good shall He never withhold
 From them that live honestly.
 Yahweh Sabaoth, happy the man
 That trusteth in Thee.

1. A line is here needed for the preservation of the parallelism.

2. Here also a line is lacking for the complete parallelism.

3. The monarch is here called "our Shield."

4. Peters here translates:

"For better a day in Thy courts than an army:
 I had rather be the threshold in God's house,
 Than a fortress in the cities of the godless."

PSALM LXXXV.

A NATIONAL PRAYER.

To the Director, to the sons of Korah, a Psalm. Psalm 85, which in several respects reminds us of 44, belongs to the late Persian period. It is a plea for the return of the Divine favor, based upon the recollection of past interventions and on the character and attributes of Yahweh Himself. The refrain after v. 4 should probably be repeated after each of the four 6-lined strophes.

I.

Yahweh, Thou didst favor Thy land:

Thou didst turn the fortune of Jacob.

Thou didst pardon the guilt of Thy people:

Thou didst cover up all their sin.

Thou didst sweep away all Thine anger:

From the heat of Thy wrath Thou didst turn.

O God of our salvation, restore us:

And remove Thy vexation against us.

II.

Wilt Thou always be angry against us?

From age to age pour out Thy wrath?

Wilt Thou not turn and revive us:

That Thy people in Thee may rejoice?

Show us, O Yahweh, Thy love:

And give to us Thy salvation!

(O God of our salvation, restore us:

And remove Thy vexation against us.)

III.

'I would hear what Yahweh² will say:

Verily, He shall speak peace

Unto His people and unto His saints,

And to them that direct their hearts to Him.³

Surely His salvation is near to His fearers:

That glory may dwell in our land.

(O God of our salvation, restore⁴ us:

And remove Thy vexation against us.)

IV.

Love and truth have met together:

Righteousness and peace have kissed together.

Truth shall sprout forth from the earth:

And righteousness look down from the heavens.⁴

Righteousness shall march before Him:

And peace⁵ shall march in His footsteps.

(O God of our salvation, restore us:

And remove Thy vexation against us.)

-
1. The words: "I would hear" are regarded by some as a gloss, since it is only here in the psalm that the 1st. Pers. Sing. is used.
 2. Omit the *'Elohim* as making the line too long.
 3. So the Gk. The Heb. text as it stands is rendered: "Let them not turn again to folly."
 4. An editor has here inserted the gloss:
"Verily, Yahweh will give prosperity:
And our land shall yield her increase."
 5. This rendering is obtained by a slight transposition of the letters in the Hebrew. As the text stands the translation would read:
"And for a way shall take His steps."

PSALM LXXXVI.

A PRAYER.

A Prayer, to David. The title of Psalm 86 is, in all likelihood, due solely to its resemblance in phraseology to the Davidic psalms of Books I and II. It is probably a late psalm, but still later editing has introduced the universalistic gloss of vv. 9-10, the quotation from 54:5 of v. 14, and the liturgical ending of vv. 16-17. The poem is remarkable for the use of the four Divine Names—*Yahweh*, *'Adonai*, *'Elohim* and *'El*.

I.

Incline Thine ear, *Yahweh*, and answer me:

For poor and needy am I.

Preserve my soul, for I am pious:

Save my soul, which trusteth in Thee.¹

II.

Be gracious to me, O Lord:²

For to Thee all day do I call.

Make glad the soul of Thy servant:

For to Thee³ I lift up my soul.

III.

For Thou, Lord, art good and forgiving:

Great of love to all who call on Thee.

Yahweh, give ear to my prayer:

Heed the voice of my supplication.

IV.

In the day of trouble I call unto Thee:

For Thou wilt answer me.

Among the gods there is none like to Thee:

Nor any works like unto Thine.⁴

V.

Teach me, O Yahweh, Thy way:
 And I will walk in Thy truth.
 My heart joyeth to fear Thy Name:
 With all my heart will I praise Thee.⁵

VI.

For great is Thy love towards me:
 From the lowest Sheol hast Thou saved me.⁶
 For Thou, Lord, art compassionate and gracious:
 Slow of anger, great in kindness and truth.⁷

1. Omit the gloss of amplification: "For Thou art my God."
2. I. e. *'Adonai*.
3. Omit the *'Adonai (my Lord)*.
4. Vv. 9-10 are a gloss, as follows:
 "All nations whom Thou hast made shall come,
 And worship before Thee, Lord:
 They shall glorify Thy Name;
 For great art Thou and Thou doest wonders:
 Thou art God alone."
5. Omit "O Lord, my God."
6. V. 14 is a quotation from Psalm 54:5:
 "O God, the proud have risen against me:
 The assembly of the wicked have sought my life:
 And have not set Thee before them."
7. Vv. 16-17 form a liturgical ending, as follows:
 "Turn to me and be gracious unto me:
 Give Thy strength to Thy servant:
 Save the son of Thy handmaid.
 Make me a sign for good:
 That my haters may see and be shamed:
 For Thou, Yahweh, hast helped me and comforted
 me."

PSALM LXXXVII.

IN PRAISE OF ZION

To the sons of Korah, a Psalm, a Song. Psalm 87 apparently belongs to a time of peaceful intercourse with the neighboring peoples. Cf. Is. 19. Since the nations mentioned include Babylon as well as Egypt, Tyre and Philistia, the date may be fixed approximately as that of the early years of Josiah.

I.

Yahweh loveth¹ the city He stablished on mountains of holiness:

More than all dwellings of Jacob (He loveth) the portals of Zion:

Glorious things He is speaking of thee, O City of God:
(*Selah.*)

II.

"I reckon among those who know Me Egypt² and Babylon:

Behold, even Tyre and Philistia,³ each is born in her:

Yea, Zion—she is called 'Mother,' for this one and that is born in her."

III.

And He—Elyon— He shall establish her:

In the roll of the nations Yahweh shall reckon
That in her is every man born.⁵ (*Selah.*)

1. The words "Yahweh loveth" must be supplied to govern the words "His founded city" and also on account of the metre and parallelism.
2. *Egypt* is here called *Rahab*, as in Is. 30:7.
3. A glossator thought it necessary, for the sake of completeness, to add *Cush*.
4. The true text is suggested by the Gk. Μητηρ Σειών. The omission of the word for mother is explained by dittography.
5. Here follows a rubric:

"Let singers and pipers together:

'All my dwellings are in Thee.'"

This is a general direction for the rendering of the psalm to a well-known melody and to the accompaniment of flutes. The text *ma'yonay* (*my springs*) should (following the Gk.) be amended to *ma'onay* (*my dwellings*).

PSALM LXXXVIII.

A NATIONAL LAMENT.

Psalm 88 has a double title, namely: 1. *A Song, a Psalm, to the sons of Korah*, and 2. *To the Director, upon Mahalath l'annoth, to Heman the Ezrahite*. Many, for this reason, consider the psalm as consisting of two fragments: A. (vv. 1-9a), from the old Korahitic psalter; and B. (vv. 9b-18), a *Maskil* of Heman the Ezrahite. This latter poem, however, could not have been composed either by Heman, the sage (I K. 5:11), or by Heman, the singer (I Ch. 6:18). The whole is probably the product of the bitter time of distress in mind and body which has given us 22 and 69 and the Book of Job. Briggs, on metrical grounds, regards 11-12 as an editorial gloss, but there seems no real necessity for this. The psalm is remarkably free from glosses, so far as is shown by the metrical and strophical arrangement.

A.

I.

Yahweh, by day I call for help:¹

I cry in the night before Thee.

O let my prayer come before Thee:

Incline Thine ear to my shout!

II.

For my soul is sated with trouble:

My life draweth nigh unto Sheol.

I am reckoned with them that go down to the Pit:

I am become like a man without help.

III.

I am like the slain among the dead:

(Among them)² that lie in the grave:

Whom Thou no more rememberest:

Yea, cut off from Thy hand.

IV.

In the lowest pit Thou hast set me :
 In the darkness, in the gulfs.
 Upon me resteth Thy wrath :
 Thou dost press me with all Thy breakers. (*Selah.*)³

V.

Thou hast removed mine acquaintance far from me :
 Thou hast made me to them a horror.
 I am shut in and I cannot go out :⁴
 Mine eye wasteth with sorrow.

B.

I.

Yahweh, all day do I call for Thee :
 I spread forth my palms unto Thee.
 Wilt Thou for the dead work wonders ?
 Shall the shades arise and praise Thee ?

II.

Is Thy love in the grave recorded ?
 Or Thy faithfulness in Abaddon ?⁵
 Are Thy wonders known in the darkness ?
 Or Thy righteousness in the land of oblivion ?

III.

And I—I appeal to Thee, Yahweh !
 At morn my prayer cometh to meet Thee.
 Why, Yahweh, castest Thou away my soul ?
 And hidest Thy countenance from me ?

IV.

Afflicted am I and feeble from youth:
 I have borne Thy terrors—am overcome.
 Over me hath passed Thy fierce wrath:
 Thy terrors have overwhelmed me.

V.

They circle me daily like waters:
 They surrounded me altogether.
 Lover and friend Thou hast put from me:
 Mine acquaintance are in the dark.

-
1. Emended textually to read thus instead of "Yahweh, God of my salvation."
 2. The words "Among them" must be supplied to complete the line.
 3. It is not quite obvious what purpose the *Selah* serves here (and later in the poem). Possibly it was the signal for a sacrificial act or for a *Praise-shout*.
 4. Peters makes this line to be an editor's note that the psalm here breaks off:—"Ended and it does not go on." But this leaves the other line of the verse unaccounted for.
 5. I. e. "Destruction," perhaps originally a deity of the underworld, but here referring to that part of the Pit where the wicked are utterly destroyed.

PSALM LXXXIX.

THE COVENANT WITH DAVID

Psalm 89 is entitled *A Maskil, to Ethan, the Ezrahite*. The Gk. renders the word "Ezrahite" as *Israelite*, which comes close to its proper signification as "native," but "Ethan" is probably a pseudonym; it certainly can not refer to the Ethan of I K. 5:11. The psalm was probably written towards the close of the period of the monarchy, perhaps after Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of B.C. 597 and prior to the destruction of Jerusalem. The main part of the psalm is a hymn of praise for God's faithfulness to the covenant made with David. But other elements have been added and now the poem is to be divided into three parts. A. (vv. 1-2, 5-14) finds illustrations of God's faithfulness in the creation and government of the universe; B. (vv. 17-21, 3-4, 22-45) rehearses the conditions of the Davidic covenant and laments the apparent failure of God to preserve the monarchy; C. (vv. 46-51) is a "How long!" poem expressive of the poet's impatient longing for the interposition of the Covenant God. The text is remarkably free from corruption, but one quatrain (3-4) has been displaced, and a liturgical gloss (15-16) has been inserted between A. and B. For the rest, the strophical form is obvious and singularly symmetrical.

A.

I.

I will sing for ever the love of Yahweh:

From age to age will I proclaim Thy faithfulness.¹

I will say: Love is built up for ever:

Thou dost stablish Thy faithfulness in the heavens.²

II.

The heavens, O Yahweh, Thy wondrousness praise:
Yea, Thy faithfulness in the assembly of saints.
For who in the sky is compared with Yahweh?
Or likened to Yahweh mid the sons of the gods?

III.

A terrible God in the council of holy ones:
Fearful exceedingly over all round about Him.
Yahweh, God of Hosts, who is like unto Thee?
Yah, Thy kindness and truth are round about Thee.

IV.

Thou rulest over the pride of the sea:
When its billows rise, Thou art their tamer.
Rahab³ Thou crushest as one smitten to death:
With the arm of Thy strength Thou scatterest Thy
foes.

V.

Thine are the heavens, Thine also the earth:
The world and its fullness—Thou didst establish
them.
The north and the south—Thou didst create them:
Tabor and Hermon rejoice in Thy Name.

VI.

Thine is an arm of might:
Strong is Thine arm, high Thy right hand.
Righteousness and judgment Thy throne's foundation:
Love and truth are before Thy face.⁴

B.

I.

Thou art the glory of our strength:
 And in Thy pleasure our horn Thou exaltest.
 For Yahweh's is our Shield:
 And the Holy One of Israel's is our King.

II.

Once Thou spakest in vision:
 To Thy Beloved Thou saidest:
 "Help have I laid on a mighty one:
 Have raised from the people a chosen one.

III.

"I found David My servant:
 With holy oil I anointed him.
 My hand holdeth him firm:
 Yea, Mine arm doth strengthen him.

IV.

"I made a covenant with My chosen:⁵
 I sware unto David My servant.
 For ever will I establish his seed:
 And from age unto age build his throne.

V.

"No enemy shall beguile him:
 No son of wickedness shall afflict him.
 I will crush his adversaries before him:
 And his haters will I smite.

VI.

“But My faith and My love shall be with him:
In My Name shall his horn be exalted.
Yea, I will set his hand in the Sea:
And his right hand on the River.

VII.

“He shall call me “Thou art my Father:
My God, and my Rock of salvation!”
Yea, I will make him the first-born:
Most high over kings of earth.

VIII.

“I will keep My love for him always:
And My covenant with him establish.
I will set for ever his seed:
And his throne like the days of heaven.

IX.

“But if his sons forsake My law:
And walk not in My judgments:
If My statutes they shall profane:
And do not observe My commandments:—

X.

“Then I will visit their offence with a rod:
And with stripes their iniquity.
But I will not remove My love from him:
And My faithfulness will not deny.

XI.

"I will not profane My covenant:
Nor alter what went forth from My lips.
Once I swore by My holiness:
Unto David I will not lie.

XII.

"His seed shall be for ever:
And his throne as the sun before Me:
Like the moon established for ever:
To stand firm as long as the skies." (*Selah.*)

XIII.

But Thou hast cast off and rejected:
With Thine anointed Thou hast been angry.
Thou hast broken covenant with Thy servant:
And defiled in the dust his crown.

XIV.

Thou hast broken down all his fences:
His fortresses Thou hast ruined.
All that pass by the way have plundered him:
He is become a reproach to his neighbors.

XV.

Thou hast raised the right hand of his adversaries:
Thou hast made all his foes to rejoice.
Yea, Thou turnest the edge of his sword:
And hast not sustained him in battle.

XVI.

Thou hast put an end to his splendor:
 And his throne Thou hast cast to the ground.
 Thou hast shortened the days of his youth:
 And covered him over with shame. (*Selah.*)^a

C.

I.

'How long, Yahweh, wilt Thou hide Thee for ever?
 Shall Thy hot anger burn like fire?
 Remember how short, Lord, our span of life:
 For what frailty Thou hast created man.
 What man shall live and shall not see death?
 Or deliver himself from the power of Sheol?

II.

Where, Lord, are Thy former deeds of love:
 Which Thou didst faithfully swear unto David?
 Remember, Lord, Thy servants' reproach:
 How I bear in my bosom the peoples' reproach:
 Wherewith, O Yahweh, Thine enemies reproach:
 Wherewith they reproach Thine anointed's foot-
 steps.

1. Omit "with my mouth."

2. The vv. 3-4, which occur here in the text, belong to B.
 See below.

3. The term "Rahab" (as in 87 and Is. 30:7) refers to
 Egypt. It reflects the influence of Babylonian mythology.

4. Here is inserted the following liturgical gloss, which may have been used at this point as a *Praise-shout*:
 "Happy the people who know Thy call!
 O Yahweh, they walk in the light of Thy face.
 In Thy Name all day long are they glad:
 And in Thy righteousness they are exalted."
 The words, "Thy call" refer to the *Teruah*, or sacred shout, which accompanied the sacrifice.
5. This quatrain is transferred from vv. 3-4, where it is manifestly out of place.
6. This *Selah* should come here rather than in the middle of the succeeding poem.
7. The exceeding bitter cry of C. may very well be the work of a later poet who had become impatient for the interposition of the Covenant God.

Doxology to Book III.

Blessed is Yahweh for ever. Amen and Amen.

BOOK IV.

XC-CVI.

THE DIVISION of the psalms after 89 into Books IV and V is plainly artificial. Since there were seventeen psalms in Book III it seemed a natural thing to count off seventeen more to make Book IV. This is in spite of the fact that a group of psalms of the same kind (103-107) is broken up by the arrangement.

Only six of the psalms of Book IV have titles and there are no psalms "to the Director," and therefore no psalms to which special musical instruments or melodies are assigned. Four of these psalms are entitled "Psalm" (*Mizmor*) and two "A Prayer." One is ascribed "to David." All the poems of this book use the Divine Name *Yahweh*.

PSALM XC.

PRAYER TO THE ETERNAL

A Prayer, to Moses, the man of God. Psalm 90, so familiar to us from its place in the Burial Office, is rightly entitled "A Prayer." The "Moses" of the title, like the "Heman" and "Ethan" of Pss. 88 and 89, is a pseudograph, justified because of the way in which the psalm reflects the "back-to-Moses" movement of the time of the restoration.

I.

O Lord,¹ a home hast Thou been to us,
Age after age!
Ere ever the mountains were born:
Or the earth and the world brought forth.
From eternity unto eternity
Thou art, O God.

II.

O turn not² man back into dust:
Nor say: Return, sons of men!
For a thousand years in Thine eyes
Are like yesterday which is gone.
Like a watch in the night Thou cuttest them off:
They become like a dream, like the grass.³

III.

At dawn it upshooteth and flourisheth:
By the evening fadeth and withereth.
So we in Thy wrath are consumed:
And perish under Thine anger.
Thou hast set our misdeeds before Thee:
In the light of Thine eyes our secrets.

IV.

All our days decline in Thy wrath:
 Our days pass away like a sigh.
 Seventy years are the days of our years:
 Eighty, perchance, if with vigor.
 But the rest are labor and sorrow:
 Soon gone and away we fly.⁴

V.

So teach us to number our days:
 That we may take wisdom to heart.
 O Yahweh, how long! Return!
 Have pity upon Thy servants!
 With Thy love in the morning satisfy us:
 Let us shout and rejoice all our days.

VI.

Give us joy for the days Thou hast vexed us:
 For the years we beheld adversity!
 Show unto Thy servants Thy working:
 And unto their children Thy glory!
 The sweetness of Yahweh, our God, be upon us:
 And prosper upon us the work of our hands!⁵

-
1. Some regard the *Yahweh* as original rather than '*Adonai*.
 2. Following the Gk. *Μὴ ἀποστρέψης*.
 3. The passage is difficult. Some re-arrangement of the text is in any case necessary.
 4. Here a gloss has been introduced as follows:
 "Who knoweth the power of Thine anger,
 Whose wrath is according to Thy majesty?"
 5. A glossator repeats, for the sake of emphasis:
 "Yea, the work of our hands establish it."

PSALM XCI.

"A SONG AGAINST PLAGUES."

Psalm 91 was originally a liturgy against perils from disease and other dangers due to demonistic influences. It uses the four names of God, namely, *'Elyon* and *Shaddai* in v. 1 and *Yahweh* and *'Elohim* in v. 2. It is a good illustration of the way in which liturgies, which in Babylon were little better than magical formulae, became spiritualized under the influence of Hebrew religion. "The Psalmist, in order to make his charm more effective, has used not only the archaic names of the Divinity, but also phrases and words from the oldest poems and psalms." (Peters.) Several glosses, reminiscent of earlier psalms and of Deuteronomy, interrupt the strophic arrangement. The poem really consists of four 7-lined strophes.

I.

In the shelter of *'Elyon* dwelling:
In the shadow of *Shaddai* abiding:
Of *Yahweh* he saith: "My Refuge,
My Fortress, my God, Whom I trust!"
For He from the snare shall deliver:
The ensnared from the deadly pestilence;¹
A shield is His truth and a buckler.

II.

For the terror of night thou shalt fear not:
For the arrow that flieth by day:
For the plague that walketh in darkness:
For the death laying waste at noon-day.
Though a thousand should fall at thy side:
Ten thousand at thy right hand:
To thee it shall not come nigh.²

III.

³ Thou hast set 'Elyon for thy dwelling:⁴
 For with thee He chargeth His angels:
 To keep thee in all thy ways.
 They shall bear thee up in their palms:
 Lest thou strike thy foot on a stone.
 Thou shalt tread upon viper⁵ and cobra:
 Thou shalt trample on lion and dragon.

IV.

"Since he clingeth to Me I will save him:
 Since he knoweth My Name, will exalt him.
 When he calleth on Me I will answer him:
 I will be with him in trouble.
 I will save him and bring him to honor:
 With length of days will I satisfy him:
 And make him to see My salvation."

-
1. Here a gloss is inserted, as follows: "With His pinions
 He shall cover thee and under His wings thou art
 safe."
 2. Omit the gloss: "Surely with thine eyes shalt thou see
 and the reward of the ungodly behold."
 3. Omit the gloss: "For Thou, Yahweh, art my refuge."
 4. Omit the gloss: "For there shall no evil come unto thee,
 nor stroke approach thy tent."
 5. Note that, following the Gk. (*ἀσπίδα*), the most probable
 reading is *zaḥal* (*viper*) rather than *shaḥal* (*lion*).

PSALM XCII.

THE SABBATH PSALM.

A Psalm, a Song, for the Sabbath Day. Psalm 92, which probably comes from the late Greek period, was evidently composed for use in the Temple services. V. 9, which interrupts the thought, is a gloss, or possibly a *Praise-shout* emphasizing the assurance that the enemies of Israel are to be destroyed.

I.

It is good to give thanks unto Yahweh:
And to harp to Thy Name, O 'Elyon.
To tell of Thy love in the morning:
And in the night of Thy faithfulness.

II.

Upon ten-stringed harp and the lyre:
To a melody with the harp.
For Thou madest me glad with Thy works:
I will shout of the deeds of Thy hands.

III.

How great are Thy works, O Yahweh:
Exceedingly deep Thy designs!
The boorish man cannot know them:
Nor the stupid man understand them.

IV.

When the wicked shoot forth as the grass:
And all doers of evil flourish:
It is that they perish forever:
But Thou art on high everlastingly.¹

V.

Thou exaltest mine horn like the wild-ox:
 And with fresh oil am I saturate.²
 On them that lay wait mine eye looketh:
 And them that rise up mine ear heareth.

VI.

The just like a palm-tree shall flourish:
 Grow high like a cedar in Lebanon.³
 In the house of Yahweh transplanted,
 In the courts of our God they shall flourish.

VII.

They shall still bear fruit in old age:
 Full of sap and green shall they be:
 To proclaim that Yahweh is upright:
 My Rock,⁴ in Whom is no evil.

1. V. 9 is a gloss, as follows:

“For, behold, Thine enemies, Yahweh,

For, behold Thine enemies perish:

The doers of evil are scattered.”

2. A reference to the mixing of the sacrificial cakes with oil.

3. It has been supposed that, as in some Assyrian temples,
 palms and cedars were planted in the Temple courts.

4. Cf. Deut. 32.

PSALM XCIII.

THE LORD IS KING.

Psalm 93 has no title in the Hebrew, but in the Gk. we have the heading: *For the day before the Sabbath, when the earth was inhabited, a Psalm, a Song, to David.* The use of the psalm on Friday is confirmed both by the Alexandrian and Palestinian tradition. The poem is one of a group of closely related psalms (93-100) all emphasizing the royalty of Yahweh. Briggs makes 93 but one part of the longer poem 96-100. The closing couplet must be regarded as a liturgical gloss.

I.

Yahweh reigneth, clothed with majesty:
Yahweh clotheth Himself with strength.
He stablisheth the world, not to be moved:
Thy Throne from of old is established.

II.

From everlasting (Yahweh),¹ Thou art:
Yahweh, the floods have lifted themselves up.
Lifted up have the floods their voice:
Lifted up have the floods their din.²

III.

But beyond the voice of the many waters:
Yea, mightier than the ocean breakers:
Mighty is Yahweh in the height:
Very sure are Thy testimonies.³

-
1. The insertion of the *Yahweh* is needed for the measure.
 2. Literally *crushing*. Briggs renders the word *Commemoration*.
 3. Here has been added the gloss:
"Holiness becometh Thine house,
Yahweh, for length of days."

PSALM XCIV.

PRAYER FOR VENGEANCE.

Psalm 94 has no title in the Hebrew, but is described in the Gk. as a psalm for the fourth day of the week (Wednesday). It is an importunate plea for vengeance against the enemies of Israel, from late post-exilic times. V. 11 is a prose gloss, suggested by the preceding lines. The whole poem falls into eleven 4-lined trimeter strophes.

I.

O God of vengeance, Yahweh!
Shine forth, O God of vengeance!
Lift up Thyself, Judge of the earth:
Render the proud their deservings!

II.

How long¹ shall the wicked, O Yahweh,
How long shall the wicked exult?
They o'erflow, they utter their pride:
They brag, the workers of evil.

III.

Thy people, O Yahweh, they crush:
Yea, they afflict Thine inheritance.
They slay the widow and stranger:
And the bereaved they murder.

IV.

And they say: "Yah shall not see:
Nor the God of Jacob regard it."
Consider, ye boors of the people:
Ye fools, when will ye reflect?

V.

He that planteth the ear—shall He hear not?
 He that formeth the eye—shall He see not?
 He that teacheth the nations—shall He punish not—
 Who instructeth mankind in knowledge?²

VI.

Happy, Yah, the man whom Thou chastenest:
 Whom out of Thy law Thou instructest!
 To give him respite from days of ill,
 Till the pit be digged for the wicked.

VII.

Yahweh will not abandon His people:
 Nor ever forsake His inheritance,
 Until righteousness to justice return,
 And after it all the upright of heart.

VIII.

Who riseth with me 'gainst the wicked?
 Who standeth with me 'gainst doers of evil?
 Had not Yahweh been a succor to me,
 Soon my soul had lain down in silence.

IX.

If I say: "My footsteps are slipping,"
 Thy mercy upholdeth me, Yahweh.
 In the crowd of the cares within me,
 Thy comforts sustain my soul.

X.

Can hell's throne bind thee with spells,³
 Planning mischief against thee by statute?
 They assault the soul of the righteous:
 They condemn the blood of the innocent.

XI.

But Yahweh^o becometh my tower:
 And my God is my rock, my defence.
 He requiteth upon them their guilt:
 In their sin Yahweh^t blotteth them out.

-
1. The familiar phrase of the old Babylonian liturgies.
 2. Here has been introduced a prose gloss, as follows:
 "Yahweh knoweth the devices of man that they are vanity."
 3. There is here a probable reference to the custom of working magic by the tying of knots. Cf. Quran, Sura 113: "I fly for refuge . . . from the mischief of women blowing on knots."
 4. Omit the *'Eloheanu* (*Our God*) as a gloss of amplification.

PSALM XCV.

A COMPOSITE PSALM.

Psalm 95 is composite, comprising A. (vv. 1-6), a summons to the worship of Yahweh, and B. (vv. 7b-11), apparently a fragment from an historical poem warning against the neglect of God's voice. The two have been united, for liturgical purposes, by a line borrowed from Psalm 100:3.

*A.**A Summons to Worship.*

I.

Come, let us sing unto Yahweh:

Let us shout to the Rock¹ of our victory.

Let us approach His presence with thanksgiving:

Let us shout unto Him with psalms.

For a great God is Yahweh:

Yea, over all gods the king.²

II.

³In His hand are the depths of the earth:

And His are the peaks of the mountains.

³His is the sea and He made it:

And the dry land His hands did fashion.

Come, bow down and fall prostrate:

Let us kneel⁴ before Yahweh, our Maker.⁵

B.

A Warning.

I.

If to-day to My voice ye will hearken,
 Harden not, as at Meribah,⁶ your hearts:—
 As on Massah's⁷ day, in the desert,
 When your fathers tempted Me,
 Tried Me and saw My works.

II.

Forty years that⁸ generation I loathed;
 Said I: Fickle people are they:
 For they have not known My way.
 So in My wrath I swear:
 They shall never enter My rest.

1. The Gk. has "the God" (τῷ Θεῷ), instead of *Rock*.
2. The Gk. has (from 94:14) the addition: "for the Lord will not cast off His people."
3. Omit here (and once below) the particle *'asher* (*whose*).
4. The Gk. has here "let us weep" (κλαύδωμεν), using the root *bakah* instead of *barak*.
5. The two originally independent poems are here joined by a line from 100:3, enlarged by a phrase:
 "For He is our God, and we the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand."
6. I. e. *Strife*. See Num. 20:13.
7. I. e. *Trial*. See Ex. 17:7.
8. The "that" is from the Gk,

PSALM XCVI.

A NEW SONG.

One of the group of "royal psalms." In the Hebrew Psalm 96 has no title, but the Greek is headed: *When the house (the Temple) is built, after the captivity, a Psalm, to David.* In I Ch. 15 this psalm is quoted as part of the hymn sung by the sons of Asaph when David brought the Ark to Jerusalem. It really belongs to a post-exilic time (possibly as late as the time of Alexander's overthrow of the Persian Empire) when the gods of the nations were signally humbled before the God of Israel. The poem is full of the reminiscence of other psalms. Vv. 7-9 are adapted from Psalm 29 and there are glosses taken from 93 and 98.

I.

Sing a new song unto Yahweh:

Sing, all the earth, unto Yahweh!

Sing unto Yahweh, bless ye His Name:

Proclaim His salvation from day to day!

II.

Tell ye His glory among the nations:

Among all the peoples His wondrous works!

For Yahweh is great, greatly worthy of praise:

Above all the gods is He terrible.

III.

For the gods of the peoples are nothings:

But Yahweh created the heavens.

Glory and honor are in His presence:

Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

IV.

²Ascribe ye to Yahweh, ye tribes of the nations:
 Ascribe ye to Yahweh glory and strength!
 Ascribe ye to Yahweh the glory of His Name:
 Bring ye oblations and enter His courts!

V.

Worship ye Yahweh with holy array:
 Tremble before Him, all the earth!
 Say to the nations: Yahweh is King:^{3 4}
 He in uprightness shall judge the people.

VI.

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth exult:
 Let the sea in its fullness roar!
 Let the field make merry and all that is in it:
 Let the trees of the wood shout for joy.⁵

-
1. Note the stairlike construction of this strophe. We have the same construction in Strophe IV.
 2. This strophe is adapted from Psalm 29, but it is addressed to "ye tribes of the nations" instead of to "ye sons of gods."
 3. To this some Latin copyist added the words: "He shall reign from the Tree," a supposed prediction of the Crucifixion. Justin Martyr (Apol. I 41) complained that the passage had been excluded from the Hebrew and from the Greek by the prejudice of the Jews.
 4. Here a line has been inserted from 93:1, as follows: "He shall stablish the earth that it cannot be moved."
 5. A final gloss has here been inserted from 98:9, as follows:
 "Before Yahweh, for He is come:
 He is come to judge the earth:
 He judgeth the world in righteousness:
 And the peoples in His truth."

PSALM XCVII.

THE LORD REIGNETH.

Another "royal psalm." In the Hebrew there is no title, but in the Gk. and the Vg. the psalm is described as *to David, when his land was restored*, evidently referring to the restoration after the Babylonian captivity. The poem is largely a mosaic of fragments drawn from other psalms, including 89, 48, 47, 95, 32, 30. As it is impossible to tell which of these quotations are glosses and which are parts of a deliberately made cento, it is, of course, impossible to reconstruct the original strophic form. The following arrangement seems the most likely.

I.

Yahweh reigneth, let the earth exult:

Let the many coast-lands¹ rejoice!

Cloud and darkness are round about Him:

Justice and judgment His Throne's foundation.²

Fire doth travel before Him:

And blazeth about His steps;

His lightnings lighten the world.

II.

The earth beholdeth and writheth:

The mountains melt like wax,

In the presence of Yahweh (the King):³

Before the Lord of all the earth.

The heavens proclaim His righteousness:

All the peoples behold His glory.

All the servers of idols are shamed:⁴

They who boast themselves in their no-gods.

Worship Him, all ye gods!

III.

Zion hath heard and rejoiced:⁵

And the daughters of Judah are glad;
Because of Thy judgments, O Yahweh.
For Thou, Yahweh 'Elyon, art above all the earth:
Greatly exalted art Thou over all gods.

IV.

Ye lovers of Yahweh, hate ye the evil:⁶

He preserveth the souls of His pious from the hand
of the wicked.

For the righteous a light is sprung up:

For the upright of heart a joy.

Be glad, O ye righteous, in Yahweh:

To remember His holiness.

1. I. e. the coastlands of the Mediterranean.

2. Sometimes taken (without sufficient reason) as a gloss.

3. The words "the King" are supplied, as the line is one tone short.

4. Perhaps a Maccabean gloss of imprecation.

5. A reminiscence of Psalm 48:11.

6. Regarded by many as a fragment from Maccabean times, with reminiscences of 30:4 and 32:10.

PSALM XCVIII.

A HYMN OF PRAISE.

Psalm 98 is entitled in the Hebrew *A Psalm (Mizmor)* and in the Gk. *A Psalm, to David*. Like the previous poems, it is a cento of familiar expressions of praise recalled from other psalms. For this reason, as in previous instances, it is difficult to distinguish glosses from quotations.

I.

Sing a new song unto Yahweh :
For wondrous things He hath done!¹
His right hand hath brought Him salvation :
And His holy arm . . .²

II.

Yahweh maketh known His salvation :
In the eyes of the nations His righteousness ;
Hath remembered His mercy (to Jacob) :³
To the house of Israel His faithfulness.

III.

All the ends of the earth have seen
The salvation of (Yahweh),⁴ our God.
All the earth, shout aloud unto Yahweh :
Break forth, sing aloud, play the harp.

IV.

Play on the harp unto Yahweh :
On the harp with the sound of psalmody.
With trumpets and blowing of horns,
Shout before Yahweh, the King.

V.

Let the sea roar and its fullness:
 The world and the dwellers therein.
 The rivers shall clap their hands:
 The mountains shall shout together.

VI.

Before Yahweh, because He is come:
 (He is come)⁵ to judge the earth.
 In justice He judgeth the world:
 And in uprightness the peoples.

-
1. The Gk. repeats the word *Lord* (Κύριος).
 2. This line is defective. Perhaps we should supply the words: "His righteousness."
 3. The words "of Jacob" are supplied from the Gk.
 4. The word is needed for measure.
 5. The second "He is come" was probably dropped by a copyist. It is required for the measure.

PSALM XCIX.

HOLY IS YAHWEH.

Psalm 99 (which has no title) seems to consist of two parts: A. (vv. 1-5) a poem in two strophes similar to the preceding "Yahweh reigneth" psalms; and B. (vv. 6-9) an addition (as in the case of 95) which goes back to ancient history for particular illustrations of the Divine sovereignty.

A.

I.

Yahweh reigneth: the peoples tremble;
 He is throned on the cherubs: the earth doth quake.
 Yahweh in Zion is great:
 High over all peoples is He.
 Let them praise the great and terrible Name:¹
 Holy is He and strong.²

II.

He reigneth: He loveth justice;
 (He hath)³ stablished uprightness (in Israel):⁴
 And justice in Jacob hath wrought;
 Exalt ye Yahweh, our God!
 Prostrate yourselves at His footstool:
 Holy is He (and strong).⁵

B.

Moses and Aaron are among His priests:
 And Samuel among those that utter His Name:
 Calling upon Yahweh—and He answered them:
 In the Pillar of Cloud He spake to them.

They kept His testimonies and the statute He gave
them:

O Yahweh, our God, Thou didst answer them.
A forgiving God wast Thou unto them:
But vengeful against their follies.

Exalt ye Yahweh, our God!
Bow down at His holy mountain!
For holy is Yahweh, our God.

1. The Hebrew, followed by the versions, has "Thy Name," but this conflicts with the context.
2. The "and strong" has been wrongly attached to the next line.
3. The Hebrew text has "Thou."
4. The "in Israel" is supplied to complete the measure and the parallelism.
5. The refrain is here conformed to that after Strophe I.
6. This is probably a *Praise-shout*, such as recurred at regular intervals in the great processional.

PSALM C.

FOR THE THANKOFFERING.

A Psalm, for the Thankoffering. Psalm 100 is a call to all the earth to lift the Praise-shout at the presentation of the Thankoffering. The liturgical formula for this shout is in the final tristich. Cf. I Ch. 16:34; II Ch. 5:13; 7:3; Ezr. 3:11; Pss. 106:1; 107:1.

I.

Shout to Yahweh, all the earth:
 Serve ye Yahweh with gladness:
 Come before Him with singing!

II.

Know that Yahweh—He is God:
 He hath made us and we are His:¹
 His people and the sheep of His pasture.

III.

Come to His gates with a Thankoffering:
 (Come to)² His courts with a psalm:
 Give thanks unto Him—bless ye His Name.

IV.

(Give thanks to Him),³ for Yahweh is good:
 His kindness is for ever:
 From age unto age His truth.

1. The proper reading is *lō (to Him)* rather than *lo' (not)*.
 A.V. adopts the latter reading and translates: "and not we ourselves."

2. The verb "Come" has to be repeated for the sake of measure.
3. The repetition of "Give thanks unto Him" is justified by the measure. It was probably dropped out by a copyist.

PSALM CI.

"THE PRINCE'S PSALM."¹

To David, a Psalm. Psalm 101 is ascribed to the Davidic Psalter both in the Hebrew and the Greek. It belongs probably to the time of the restoration prior to the coming of Nehemiah. It is the moral code of a ruler. The poem commences with a trimeter tetrastich by way of introduction. This is followed by 3 strophes in pentameter, here arranged in the "echo-rhyme" form. Many of the lines end in the assonance *ī*, but it is not safe to assume that the exceptions are glosses.

(Introduction.)

Mercy and judgment I sing:
 To Thee, Yahweh, I harp.
 I will muse² on the way of the perfect:
 When wilt Thou come unto me?

I.

In the innocence of my heart will I walk,
 In the midst of my house.
 I will not set in front of mine eyes
 A thing of naught.³
 The doing of transgression I hate:
 It shall not cling to me.
 A perverse heart is far from me:
 No evil I know.

II.

If in secret one slander his neighbor,
 Him will I destroy.

The lofty of eye and the proud of heart
 I will not endure.
 Mine eyes shall be on the faithful of the land,⁴
 With me to dwell.
 Whoso walketh the way of the innocent,
 He is my minister.

III.

He shall not dwell in the midst of my house
 Who worketh deceit.
 The teller of lies shall not be established
 In front of mine eyes.
 Morning by morning⁵ I will destroy
 All the wicked of the land:
 To cut off from the city of Yahweh
 All the doers of iniquity.

-
1. Ernest, the Pious, of Saxe Gotha (1601-1675) used to send this psalm to an unfaithful minister. Hence it became a proverb, when an official had done wrong: "He will soon receive the Prince's Psalm."
 2. The root is used from which comes the noun *Maskil* (*meditation*).
 3. I. e. *Belial*.
 4. The expression "faithful of the land" is a 'a. λ. Cf. Is. 8:2 and Prov. 25:13.
 5. Possibly the hymn was used as an accompaniment to the Morning Sacrifice.

PSALM CII.

A COMPOSITE PSALM.

A Prayer of the afflicted, when he fainteth and poureth out his plaint before Yahweh. The psalm is really composite, consisting of two poems. A. (1-11) is a Prayer on behalf of the afflicted nation, written probably towards the close of the Persian period. B. (12-22, 28) is an expression of confidence in the redemption of Israel and the eternal reign of God. It was not unmeet that the two motifs should be associated in a single psalm, and the two parts go well together. But a glossator, probably for the sake of recurring to the earlier motif, has introduced into B. two interpolations, v. 23, taken from Is. 38:10, and vv. 24-27, a prayer to the Eternal.

A.

The Afflicted Nation.

I.

O Yahweh, hear my prayer:

And let my cry come before Thee!

Hide not Thy face from me,

In the day of my straitness!

Incline unto me Thine ear:

In the day when I call hasten to answer me!

For my days are vanished like smoke:

And my bones are charred like a hearth.

II.

Withered like grass and dried up is my heart:

For my food I forget to eat.

Because of the voice of my groaning;

Cleaveth my bone to my flesh.

I am like a pelican¹ of the desert:
I am become like an owl in the ruins.
Sleepless am I and become
Like a lonely bird on the roof.

III.

All day do my foes reproach me:
They that mock me make me a curse.
For ashes like bread have I eaten:
And my drink have I mingled with tears.
Because of Thine anger and wrath,
Thou hast lifted me up and down-thrown me.
My days are a lengthening shadow:
And I am withered like grass.

B.

The Eternal.

I.

And Thou, Yahweh, abidest for ever:
And from age to age Thy remembrance.
Thou shalt rise and take pity on Zion:
For the time to be gracious is come.²
For Thy servants delight in her stones:
And upon her dust they look tenderly.
So the nations shall fear Yahweh's Name:
And all kings of the earth Thy glory.

II.

For Yahweh shall build up Zion:
And shall be seen in His glory.
He shall turn to the prayer of the destitute:
And shall not despise their prayer.

This is writ for the next generation:
 That a people unborn may praise Yah.
 For He looked from His holy height:
 Earthward from heaven He looked.

III.

To hear the cry of the prisoner:
 To release the doomed unto death:
 To recount Yahweh's Name in Zion:
 And in Jerusalem His praise.
 When the peoples are gathered together:
 And kingdoms for service to Yahweh,³
 Let the sons of Thy servants abide:⁴
 And their seed be established for ever!

-
1. Following the Gk. This allusion led to the use of the pelican as a symbol of Christ.
 2. Here the gloss has been inserted: "for the feast is come."
 3. V. 23 is a gloss borrowed from Is. 38:10. It consists of two pentameter lines as follows:
 "He brought down my strength in my journey,
 And shortened my days.
 I say: 'O my God, do not take me away
 In the midst of my days!'"
 4. Vv. 24-27 are perhaps a quotation from some otherwise lost psalm:
 "From age unto age are Thy years:
 Aforetime Thou foundedst the earth
 And the heavens, the work of Thy hands.
 These shall perish but Thou shalt endure:
 And they all shall wear out like a garment:
 Like a robe Thou shalt change them and they shall
 change.
 But Thou, O Yahweh, art the same:
 And Thy years shall have no end,"

PSALM CIII.

THE DIVINE COMPASSION.

To David. Psalm 103 is the first of a series of five praise-songs which formed a kind of liturgy of thanksgiving for the pilgrims attending the great feasts at Jerusalem. This beautiful poem celebrates the divine attributes of compassion and love, just as 104 celebrates the presence of God in nature, and as 105-6 celebrates the presence of God in history. The recitation of the divine attributes which forms the body of the psalm is prefaced by a liturgical tetrastich calling upon man to praise Yahweh. It is followed by two similar tetrastichs reiterating this appeal. There is no need to take this last as a gloss.

A.

Bless thou Yahweh, O my soul:
 And all within me His holy Name!
 Bless thou Yahweh, O my soul:
 And forget not all His bounties!

B.

I.

Who pardoneth all mine iniquity:
 Who healeth all my diseases:
 Who redeemeth my life from the Pit:
 And crowneth with love and compassions:
 Who sateth with good my desires:¹
 And reneweth my youth like an eagle's.²

II.

A doer of righteousness is Yahweh:
 And of justice toward all the oppressed:
 Making known unto Moses His ways:
 To the sons of Israel His deeds.
 Compassionate and gracious is Yahweh:
 Long-suffering, abundant in love.

III.

He will not always be striving:
 Nor maintain His anger for ever.
 He dealeth not with us after our sins:
 Nor rewardeth us after our iniquities.
 But high as the heaven is over the earth,
 So great is His love upon them that fear Him.

IV.

Far as the east is from the west,
 So far from us hath He set our transgressions.
 Like as a father pitieth his sons,
 So pitieth Yahweh them that fear Him.
 For He knoweth whereof we are made:
 He remembereth that we are dust.

V.

As for man, like grass are his days:
 As a bloom of the field so doth he bloom.
 For the wind passeth over it and it is not:
 And its place doth know it no more.
 But from everlasting is Yahweh's love:
 And to everlasting for them that fear Him.³

C.

Yahweh hath stablished His throne in heaven:

And over all He ruleth His kingdom.

Bless ye Yahweh, ye angels of His:

Ye mighty ones who perform His word!

Bless ye Yahweh, all His host:

Ye ministers that do His pleasure!

Bless ye Yahweh, all His works:

In all places of His dominion!⁵

1. Following the Gk. *τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν*, and the Vg. *desiderium tuum*. The Hb. has "thy mouth."

2. A possible reference to the Phoenix story.

3. Here has been inserted a gloss of amplification:
"And His righteousness unto children's children:
To them that keep His covenant:
And remember His precepts to do them."

4. Enlarged by a glossator who adds: "to hear the voice of His word."

5. A final gloss (possibly a Praise-shout) has been added here:

"Bless Yahweh, O my soul!"

PSALM CIV.

THE PSALM OF CREATION.

Psalm 104 is entitled *to David* in the Gk., but has no title in the Hb. It is a hymn of creation, based upon the narrative of Gen. 1-2:3, but other traditions of creation are embodied. The poem resembles in many particulars the famous Hymn to Atun by Amenhotep IV and by some has been considered as indebted to the Egyptian writer. The psalm could hardly have been written earlier than the Greek period. It is arranged in seven strophes, each consisting of a double trimeter quatrain. A number of glosses have crept into the Masoretic text, which are given in the notes below.

I.

(God the Creator of Light and the Elements.)

'My God, Thou art great exceedingly:

Glory and honor hast Thou endued!

Putting on light like a mantle:

Spreading out heaven as a tent!

Who built in the waters His stairways:

Who set the clouds for His battle-car:

Making the winds His messengers:

His servants the fire and the flame.

II.

(Stabliſher of the Earth.)

Who settled the earth on its bases,

That it moved not for ages for ever:

Th' abyss like a garment its covering:

The waters stand over the hills.

From (the voice of) Thy chiding they flee:
From the voice of Thy thunder they hurry;²
A bound hast Thou set that they pass not:
Nor return to cover the earth.

III.

(Giver of Waters.)

Who sent freshets into the gullies;
They take their way 'mid the mountains:
Afford drink to all beasts of the field:
There the onagers break their thirst.

The fowls from the sky settle down:
They utter their song from the branches;
Who watereth the hills from His chambers above:
The earth from its outburst is sated.

IV.

(Creator of Vegetation.)

Who produced the grass for the cattle:
And plants for the labor of man:
To bring forth bread from the earth:³
To make shine man's face with oil.⁴

The trees of the Lord shall be full:⁵
The pines are her home for the stork;
The mountains, the high, for the goats:
The rocks a strong fort for the conies.

V.

(Creator of the Luminaries.)

Who hath made the moon for seasons:
 The sun knoweth his setting;⁶
 The young lions roar for their prey,
 To entreat their food from God.

When the sun breaketh out they gather:
 And lay them down in their lairs;
 Then man goeth forth to his task:
 To his labor until the dusk.⁷

VI.

(Maker of Animal Life.)

The earth is full of Thy creatures:
 Yonder sea also, great and wide;
 There are creeping things without number:
 Living things—small with the great.⁸

All look unto Thee in hope,
 That Thou give them their food in its season.
 Thou givest it them and they gather it.
 Thou openest Thine hand, they are satisfied.⁹

VII.

(The Lord, the Life-giver.)

Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled:
 Thou withdrawest their breath, they expire:¹⁰
 Thou returnest their breath, they are made:
 Thou renewest the face of the ground.

Yahweh's glory is everlasting:
 Yahweh is glad in His works.¹¹
 Sweet unto Him is my musing:
 I, too, I rejoice in His works.¹²

1. A liturgical gloss (similar to the opening of Psalm 103) has been prefixed to the psalm: "Bless Yahweh, O my soul."
2. Here has been inserted a tetrameter couplet as a gloss of expansion: "The mountains rose, the valleys sank down, unto the place which Thou didst appoint for them."
3. The words: "and wine that maketh glad man's heart" have been here inserted to supply an apparent omission.
4. The words: "and bread which strengtheneth man's heart" is a gloss, a mere variant of a preceding line.
5. To the phrase: "The trees of the Lord" an explanatory addition has been inserted: "The cedars of Lebanon which He hath planted."
6. Here has been interpolated: "Thou makest darkness and it is night, wherein all beasts of the forest creep forth." The gloss is a mere repetition and in another metre.
7. The couplet: "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works, in wisdom hast Thou made them all" is a liturgical addition.
8. Here has been introduced a gloss as follows: "There go the ships (*nautili?*); there is leviathan whom Thou hast made to play with him." It is intended as an illustration of the phrase: "living things, small and great."
9. Omit the *tôbh* (*good*) as making the line too long.
10. The words "return to their dust" is a gloss, reminiscent of Gen. 3: 19.

11. Vv. 32-33 are liturgical additions, as follows:
 "Who looketh at the earth and it trembleth:
 Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke.
 Let me sing to Yahweh as long as I live:
 Make music to my God while I have my being."
12. V. 35 also is a gloss, as follows:
 "Let sinners cease from the earth:
 Let the godless exist no more!"

PSALMS CV-CVI.

GOD IN HEBREW HISTORY.

Psalms 105-106 consist of a long series of narrative quatrains which tell the story of Israel from the time of Abraham to that of the Judges. As the entire poem was too long for public religious use as a whole, it has been divided into two and provided with the needed liturgical introductions and endings. To avoid the abrupt close which would have resulted from the use of Part I alone, an alternative ending has been given which overlaps the narrative of Part II. The following transcription shows the liturgical additions as well as the original narrative. The several glosses which are omitted in the transcription are given in the notes. Much of the psalm is quoted in I Ch. 16 and is there referred to the time of David. The proper date is somewhere late in the Persian period.

PART I.

(Liturgical Introduction.)

I.

Give thanks unto Yahweh: call on His Name:

Make known among the people His deeds!

Sing to Him: harp to Him:

On all of His wonders meditate!

II.

Praise Him in His holy Name:

Be glad of heart, ye seekers of Yahweh!

Inquire ye of Yahweh and of His might:

Seek ye His face evermore!

III.

Remember the wonders He did :
 His signs and the judgments of His mouth,
 Ye seed of His servant Abraham :
 Ye sons of Jacob His chosen !

(The Story. I.)

I.

Yahweh, He is our God :
 In all the earth are His judgments.
 He remembereth for ever His covenant :
 The word He commandeth for thousands of ages.

II.

The same He ordained with Abraham :
 And sware unto Isaac ;
 And appointed for a statute to Jacob :
 To Israel a covenant for ever.

III.

Saying : To thee I give Canaan's land,
 For the lot of your heritage,
 When the number of them was few :
 As nothing, and they strangers therein.

IV.

And they wandered from nation to nation :
 From one kingdom to another people.
 He permitted no man to oppress them :
 And gave warning for their sake to kings.¹

V.

Then on the land He sent famine:
He broke all the staff of bread.
Before them He sent a man:
Joseph was sold for a slave.

VI.

They humbled his feet with fetters:
The iron entered his soul,
Till the time when his word came true:
The saying of Yahweh tested him.

VII.

The king sent and delivered him:
The people's ruler and freed him.
He made him lord of his house:
The ruler of all his substance.²

VIII.

And Israel came into Egypt:
Jacob dwelt in the land of Ham.
He increased His people exceedingly:
And made him stronger than Egypt.

IX.

He turned their heart to hate His people:
To deal treacherously with His servants.
Moses He sent, His servant:
Aaron whom He had chosen.

X.

He sent among them the words of His signs :
 And portents in the land of Ham.
 Darkness He sent and it was dark :
 But against His word they rebelled.

XI.

He smote their waters into blood :
 And slew their fish.
 Their land swarmed with frogs,
 In the chambers of their kings.

XII.

He commanded and the swarm came :
 Mosquitoes in all their borders.
 He gave them hail for rain :
 Flaming fire in their land.

XIII.

And smote their vines and fig-trees :
 And brake the trees of their border.
 He commanded and the locust came :
 And insects beyond number.

XIV.

And they ate up all the grass in their land :
 And devoured the fruit on their ground.
 And He smote all the first-born in their land :
 The first-fruits of all their strength.

XV.

And He brought them out with silver and gold:
 And no straggler was in their ranks.
 At their departing Egypt was glad:
 For terror had fallen upon them.³

(Ending of Part I, when used alone.)

XVI.

They asked and He brought in quails:
 And filled them with bread from heaven.
 He opened the rock and waters flowed forth:
 There ran in the dry lands a river.

XVII.

For He remembered His holy word
 To Abraham, His servant:
 And brought forth His people with gladness:
 With joyful shouting His chosen.

XVIII.

And gave them the lands of the nations:
 To possess the toil of the peoples;
 That they should keep His statutes:
 And should observe His laws. *(Hallelu-jah.)*

PART II.

(Liturgical Introduction.)

Give thanks unto Yahweh, for He is good:
 For His love is everlasting.
 Who can declare the might of Yahweh,
 Or make known all His praise?
 Happy are they who keep His judgment,
 Doing righteousness all the time!

(Penitential Interlude.)

Yahweh, remember me ; in Thy people's favor,
 With Thy salvation visit me ;
 That I may see the good of Thy chosen,
 And rejoice in the joy of Thy people.

We have sinned with our fathers :
 Have done evil and dealt wickedly.
 Our fathers in Egypt
 Understood not Thy wonders.

Thy great love they remembered not :
 Rebelled at the sea, the Sea of Reeds.
 And He saved them for the sake of His Name,
 That He might make known His power.

(The Story. II.)

I.

He rebuked the Sea of Reeds that it dried up :
 And brought them, as on dry land, through the
 depths.
 So He saved them out of the hand of the hater :
 And redeemed them out of the hand of the enemy.

II.

And the waters covered their adversaries :
 There was not one of them left.
 Then they believed His word :
 And His praises they sang.

III.

Yet quickly forgat they His deeds:
And waited not on His counsel;
And they lusted sore in the desert:
And tempted God in the wilderness.

IV.

So He gave them their desire,
And sent leanness into their souls.
Then they vexed Moses in the camp:
And Aaron, the holy of Yahweh.

V.

So earth opened and swallowed up Dathan:
And engulfed the company of Abiram.
And fire burned up their company:
A flame consumed the wicked.

VI.

They made a calf in Horeb:
And worshipped a molten image.
So they exchanged their glory
For the image of a grass-eating ox.

VII.

They forgat God, their savior,
Who had done great things in Egypt;
Marvellous things in the land of Ham:
Fearsome things at the Sea of Reeds.

VIII.

So He said He would destroy them,
 Had not Moses, His chosen,
 Stood in the gap before Him,
 To turn back His wrath from destroying.

IX.

And the pleasant land they despised:
 To His word they were not faithful;
 But grumbled in their tents:
 They heard not the voice of Yahweh.

X.

So He lift up His hand against them:
 In the desert to overthrow them;
 To scatter their seed through the nations:
 And to strew them among the lands.

XI.

And they joined them to Baal Peor:
 And ate offerings unto the dead;
 And offended Him by their deeds:
 So that plague brake out among them.

XII.

The Phineas stood up and protested:
 So that the plague was diminished.
 And to him it was reckoned for righteousness,
 Age after age and for ever.

XIII.

Yet at the waters of Strife they stirred Him to wrath,
That it went ill with Moses for their sake;
Because they embittered his spirit,
So that he cursed with his lips.

XIV.

They did not destroy the peoples,
As Yahweh commanded them;
But mingled among the nations,
And learned their doings.

XV.

Also they served their idols:
So that these were a snare unto them;
And they sacrificed their sons
And their daughters unto the demons.⁴

XVI.

They became unclean in their doings:
And by their acts they played the harlot;
So Yahweh's wrath waxed hot 'gainst His people:
And He loathed His heritage.

XVII.

Into the hand of the nations He gave them:
And their haters lorded it over them.
Their enemies tyrannized over them:
And under their hand they were subject.⁵

XVIII.

But He saw when they were in trouble:
 When He heard their cry for help;
 And remembered His covenant with them:
 After the greatness of His love He pitied them.⁶

(Liturgical Ending.)

Save us, O Yahweh, our God:
 And gather us from the nations:
 To give thanks to Thy holy Name:
 And to glory in Thy praise!

1. Here has been interpolated the words: "Touch not Mine Anointed and do My prophets no harm." The glosses in this psalm are for the most part the pious comments of a later age reading into the earlier history of Israel the experiences of the Captivity and later.
2. V. 22 is a gloss, as follows: "To bind his princes at his will and that he might teach his elders wisdom."
3. V. 39 is also a gloss, as follows: "To spread a cloud for a covering, and fire to give light in the night."
4. Here has been interpolated another gloss: "And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they offered unto the idols of Canaan and the land was polluted with blood."
5. Psalm 106:43 is a gloss, as follows: "Many times did He deliver them, but they chose rebellious counsel and sank low in their iniquity."
6. A glossator has here inserted: "He made them also to be pitied of all that carried them captive."

Doxology to Book IV.

Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Israel:

From Everlasting to everlasting;

And let all the people say, Amen.

Hallelu-jah.

BOOK V.

CVII-CL.

AS ALREADY NOTED, Book V of the Psalter has been created artificially by an arbitrary division of the collection 90-150. The division has been effected with some violence, since 107 manifestly belongs to the great historical trilogy, 104, 105-6, and 107. As the Book stands, it consists of groups of Hallel's, namely, 111-117, 135-136, 146-150, and the Pilgrim Psalter, 120-134. To these have been added certain psalms which had no other place in the Psalter. Of these nine (109, 110, 138, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, and 145) are ascribed to Davidic sources, once (142) with an historical reference; 109 and 140 are also "Director" psalms; 142 is a *Maskil*; and 145 is entitled a *T'hillah*, or Praise-song. The remaining psalms which have been included are 107 (belonging, as aforesaid, to the group 104-107); 108 (taken from two psalms in Book II); 118 (the Great Processional); 119 (The Acrostic of the Law); and 137 (a psalm of the early exile). Psalm 150 may be regarded as a general Doxology adapted for the close of the entire Psalter.

PSALM CVII.

THE HYMN OF THE RANSOMED.

The main portion of 107 (vv. 4-32) is a beautifully symmetrical poem descriptive of the experience of four classes of pilgrims (possibly exiles), from the four quarters of the horizon. This has been fitted to an introductory *Hallel* (1-3) and has been supplemented by a long expansion in similar vein, but without the symmetry of the original poem. In the present transcription the original psalm is given as A. and the addition B. There are also two glosses of amplification, namely, vv. 25-27 (the description of a sea-storm) and 30. These are probably by the same hand as the addition. The final verse also is a gloss, from Hos. 14:10 and Is. 63:7. The psalm has no title in the Heb., but in the Gk. is introduced with a *Hallelujah*.

Introduction.

"Give thanks unto Yahweh, because He is good:
 And His love is for ever."
 So let the ransomed of Yahweh say,
 Whom He ransomed from the enemy's hand:
 And gathered them in from the lands:
 East and west, and from north and south.

*A.**The Hymn.*

I.

(*The Wanderers, from the South.*)

Some strayed in the waste, in the desert:
 They found no way to a settled abode.
 They were hungry also and thirsty:
 Their soul fainted within them.

(CHORUS.)

So they cried in their trouble to Yahweh:
 From their distresses He saved them.
 And their ways in the way He made straight:
 To go to a settled abode.
 For His love let them give thanks to Yahweh:
 For His signs to the sons of men.
 For the thirsty soul He doth satisfy:
 And filleth the hungry with good.

II.

(The Captives, from the East.)

Some lay in gloom, in dense darkness:
 Bondmen in misery and chains.¹
 Their heart was crushed with hard labor:
 They stumbled and there was no helper.

(CHORUS.)

So they cried in their trouble to Yahweh:
 From their distresses He saved them.
 From the gloom and dense darkness He raised
 them:
 And their fetters He burst asunder.
 For His love let them give thanks to Yahweh:
 For His signs to the sons of men.
 For He smasheth the portals of bronze:
 And the bars of iron He breaketh.

III.

(The Foolish, from the North.)

Fools, because of their trespass,
 And because of their sins, were afflicted.

For all food their soul had loathing:
They drew near to the gates of death.

(CHORUS.)

So they cried in their trouble to Yahweh:
From their distresses He saved them.
He sent forth His word and healed them:
And preserved them from their destruction.
For His love let them give thanks to Yahweh:
For His signs to the sons of men.
Let them offer Him thanksgiving offerings:
And recount His deeds with a shout.

IV.

(The Sea-farers, from the West.)

Some went down to the sea in ships:
Doing business on the great waters.
These saw the doings of Yahweh:
And His wondrous works in the deep.²

(CHORUS.)

So they cried in their trouble to Yahweh:
From their distresses He raised them.
He stilled the storm to a whisper:
And the waves sank into silence.³
For His love let them give thanks to Yahweh:
For His signs to the sons of men.
In th' assembly of the people exalt Him:
In the seat of the elders praise Him.

*B.**I.*

He maketh the rivers a wilderness :
And a thirsty land of the water-springs ;
Into salt waste turneth the oasis,
For the badness of them that dwell there.

II.

He maketh the wilderness water-pools :
And the thirsty land into fountains.
And there He setteth the hungry :
To build them a city to dwell in.

III.

And fields they sow and plant vineyards :
And get them fruits of increase.
He blesseth them and they multiply :
And their cattle do not diminish.

IV.

When they are minished and humbled,
Through oppression, trouble and sorrow,
He poureth contempt upon princes,
Astray in the desert He sendeth them.

V.

But He raiseth the poor from affliction :
And maketh a flock of His families.
The upright shall see and rejoice :
All wrong-doing shall stop its mouth.⁴

1. V. 11 is a gloss of expansion, as follows:

"Because they defied God's words:
Despised the counsel of the Highest."

2. Vv. 25-27 have been inserted by a glossator, glad to expand the picture of a storm at sea:

"For He spake and raised up the storm-wind,
Which lifted its waves on high.
They went up to heaven and down to the abyss:
Their soul melted away in their trouble.
Like a drunkard they reeled; they staggered:
All their wits were clean gone."

3. A further gloss has been here interpolated (v. 30):

"And they rejoiced that they were quiet:
That He brought them to a haven desired."

4. V. 43 is a pious reflection, added by a copyist:

"Who is wise that he may heed this:
And perceive the mercies of Yahweh?"

PSALM CVIII.

A COMPOSITE PSALM.

This psalm, which is entitled *A Song, a Psalm, to David*, is composed of portions of two psalms in Book II, namely, A. (vv. 1-5), taken from Psalm 57:7-11; and B. (vv. 6-13), taken from Psalm 60:5-12. This last poem is itself composite; see Psalm 60. The verbal differences in the several portions of this mosaic of song are very slight. For example, 108 has *Yahweh* where 57:9 has *'Adonai*.

PSALM CIX.

A PRAYER.

To the Director, a Psalm, to David. The psalm is possibly composite, but in its present form consists of an appeal to God against the slanderers of the nation, probably in the time of Nehemiah. These slanderers are called "satans" and their terrible curse is quoted, with a protest against its malignity and injustice. Verses 30-31 are a liturgical gloss which belongs in all probability to Maccabean times. There are several other glosses which are reminiscences of earlier imprecatory psalms.

I.

God of my praise, keep not silent!

For the mouth of the wicked¹ is opened against me.

With lying lips they are talking against me:

And they compass me round with words of hatred.

Yea, for no cause they attack me:

In return for my love they accuse² me.³

They reward me evil for good:

And hatred in place of my love: (*saying*)

II.

"Appoint Thou a wicked man over him:

A satan at his right hand.

Let him be condemned in his judgment:

Let his prayer be counted for sin.

"Let the days of his life be few:

And his office another take.

Let his children be fatherless:

And his wife a widow.

"Let his children wander and beg,
Expelled from their ruined homes.
Let his creditor levy on all that he hath:
And strangers make spoil of his labor.

"Be there no one to offer him kindness:
And no one to favor his orphans.
Be clean cut off his posterity:
In one generation their name blotted out.

"Be remembered his father's iniquity:⁴
And the sin of his mother unblotted.
Let them be before Yahweh forever:
Cut off from the earth their memory."

III.

For he mindeth him not to show kindness:
But pursueth the poor and the needy,
And the broken of heart to slay him;
He taketh no pleasure in blessing.⁵

Cursing he loveth and it cometh to him:
He is clothed with cursing like clothing;
Yea, like water it entereth his inwards:
And like oil into his bones.

May it be for the robe he endueth:
For the girdle he weareth alway.
This be mine accusers' reward:
Even theirs who speak evil against me.

But Thou, O Yahweh, work with me:
 Since good is Thy love, O rescue me!
 For I am needy and poor:
 And my heart is in anguish within me.

I pass like a lengthening shadow:
 I am shaken out like a locust.
 Through fasting my knees give way:
 And my flesh, without oil, is perishing.^o

Help me, O Yahweh, my God:
 O save me, after Thy kindness!
 Let them know that this is Thy hand:
 Thou, O Yahweh, hast done it.

IV.

(Liturgical Ending.)

They may curse, but do Thou bless:
 Be they confounded: let Thy servants rejoice!
 Clothe mine accusers with shame:
 Be they wrapped in their shame like a cloak!

I will greatly give thanks unto Yahweh:
 In the midst of the multitude praise Him.
 At the right of the needy He standeth:
 To preserve his soul in the judgment.

-
1. Omit the words: "and a mouth of deceit" as a gloss.
 2. Literally "play the satan." The psalm belongs to the period when this idea was quite prominent. Cf. the book of Job and the early chapters of Zechariah.

3. Omit the gloss: "And I—a prayer."
4. Omit: "with Yahweh."
5. Note the change of line which has been made to preserve the symmetry of the quatrain.
6. Here has been inserted a gloss, as follows: "And I am become their reproach: they look, they wag their heads." It is a reminiscence of Pss. 31, 79, 89, 22.

PSALM CX.

THE PRIEST KING.

Psalm 110 is entitled both in the Hb. and the Gk. *A Psalm, to David*. It is really a very late psalm, consisting of two separate oracles from Yahweh as to the security of the royalty and priesthood of the seed of David. Some have indeed referred the psalm to the institution of Joshua, son of Josedek, as High Priest. But that the subject is the Maccean Priest-king, Simon, is well-nigh certain from the fact that the initial letters of the first four lines (*Shin, Mem, Ayin, Nun*) spell out the name. No acrostic is recognizable in the second strophe, and this may be an addition. Nor is the assonance of Strophe I continued in the second.

I.

An Oracle of Yahweh unto my Lord:¹

“Sit thou at My right hand,²

Till I make of thy foes a stool for thy feet.

The rod of thy strength Yahweh sendeth from
Zion:

Rule thou in the midst of thy foes.

Willing thy people in the day of thy host:

From the womb of the dawn the dew of thy
youth!”

II.

Sworn hath Yahweh, nor is He sorry:

“Thou art a Priest for ever,

After the way of Melchizedek.

My Lord upon my right hand

Smiteth kings in the day of his wrath.³

Among nations he judgeth: the valleys⁴ he filleth:
Wide o'er the land he smiteth the chiefs.
From the brook by the way-side he drinketh:⁵
Therefore his head he uplifteth."

1. The psalmist is speaking for David in his seed. Cf. the promise in II Sam. 7: 18-29.
2. Cf. Ps. 45: 9.
3. Cf. the *Epic of Penta-ur*, where the god Amon is represented as fighting by the side of Rameses II.
4. Reading *ge'oth* (*valleys*) instead of *gvīyyōth* (*dead bodies*).
5. Possibly a reference to the story of Gideon and his three hundred warriors. See Jud. 7.

PSALM CXI.

AN ACROSTIC HALLEL.

Psalms 111 and 112 are twin acrostic psalms, the former being a rosary of the works of God and the latter a rosary of the traits of righteousness. They form the introduction to what is known as the Egyptian Hallel, consisting of the seven psalms from 111 to 117, each commencing with a "Hallelu-yah." By some the 118th is also included and the eight poems associated with the eight days of the Passover octave. The present psalm is composed of twenty-two trimeter lines, arranged as eleven synthetic couplets, each line corresponding to a letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

- Aleph.* I will thank Thee, Yahweh, with all my heart :
Beth. Amid the upright and in the assembly.
Gimel. Great are the workings of Yahweh :
Daleth. Studied of all who love Him.¹
He. Splendor and glory His doing :
Vaw. And His justice abideth for ever.
Zayin. Memorial He made of His wonders :
Heth. Yahweh is gracious and pitiful.
Teth. Prey to His fearers He giveth :
Yodh. Remembereth forever His covenant.
Kaph. Power to His people declareth :²
Lamedh. To give them the heathen's inheritance.
Mem. His workings are justice and truth :³
Nun. Trustworthy are all His precepts.

<i>Samech.</i>	Established for ever and ever :
<i>Ayin.</i>	Done in uprightness and truth.
<i>Pe.</i>	Redemption He sent to His people :
<i>Tsade.</i>	Commanded for ever His covenant.
<i>Qoph.</i>	Holy and fearful His Name :
<i>Resh.</i>	His fear is the beginning of wisdom. ⁴
<i>Shin.</i>	Sound wisdom is their's who are dutiful :
<i>Tau.</i>	His praise endureth forever.

1. The present translation follows the Gk. rather than the Hb. Either text makes good sense.

2. The words "of His works" make the line too long and must be regarded as the insertion of a glossator.

3. In this line the words "of His hands" are also the insertion of a glossator. The gloss spoils the metre.

4. Omit the "Yahweh" as a gloss.

PSALM CXII.

SECOND ACROSTIC HALLEL.

Psalm 112 is the rosary of the happiness of the man who fears Yahweh. It is a companion piece to 111, the rosary of the works of God. The two are closely related, since the standard by which human virtue is appraised is none other than that of the righteousness of an all-holy God. "Be ye therefore perfect, because your Father in heaven is perfect."

- Aleph.* Happy is he that feareth Yahweh:¹
Beth. In His commandments he greatly delighteth.
Gimel. Mighty in the land shall be his seed:
Daleth. Blessed shall be the race of the upright.
He. Wealth and riches are in his house:
Vaw. And his righteousness standeth forever.
Zayin. Light for the upright shineth:²
Heth. The righteous is gracious and merciful.
Teth. Good for the gracious and benevolent:
Yodh. He maintaineth his business with justice.
Kaph. From his place he shall never be moved:
Lamedh. An everlasting memory hath the righteous.
Mem. Of evil things he shall not be afraid:
Nun. Fixed in his heart, in Yahweh his trust.³
Samech. His heart established, he shall never tear:
Ayin. Till upon his foe he looketh.

<i>Pe.</i>	He scattereth, he giveth to the poor:
<i>Tsade.</i>	His righteousness abideth forever.
<i>Qoph.</i>	His horn is exalted in honor:
<i>Resh.</i>	The wicked seeth and is discomfited.
<i>Shin.</i>	His teeth he gnasheth, wasteth away:
<i>Tau.</i>	The desire of the wicked shall perish.

-
1. Small emendation is needed in a poem whose original form is protected by acrostic. In this line the *'ish (man)* is a gloss, inserted probably by a copyist who thought the sentence in need of an expressed subject.
 2. Here the *hōshek (darkness)* is an explanatory gloss which makes the line too long.
 3. Briggs regards the "Yahweh" in this line as a gloss, but it is here retained.

PSALM CXIII.

A SONG OF PRAISE.

Psalm 113 is the first psalm of the Egyptian Hallel proper. It was used at the three great Feasts, the Feast of the Dedication, and at the New Moon. At the Passover it was sung, together with 114, early in the service, before the emptying of the second cup. The poem consists of four tetrastichic trimeter strophes and, both in Hb. and Gk., is preceded by a *Hallelu-yah*.

I.

Praise ye Yahweh, O servants:¹
Praise ye the Name of Yahweh!
The Name of Yahweh be blessed,
Henceforth and forever!

II.

From the sun's rise to its setting
Praised be Yahweh's Name:
Exalted above all nations:
His glory above the heavens!

III.

Who is like Yahweh, our God,
Who exalteth Himself to sit throned!
Who humbleth Himself to behold
In heaven and on the earth?

IV.

Who lifteth up from the dust,²
To set on a throne His people:³
He Who enthroneth the barren,⁴
The joyful mother of sons.

1. In this line the word "servants" is read as in the absolute case, not the construct, "servants of."
2. The word *dal* (*poor*) is a gloss; also the following words:
"from the dung-hill lifteth up the needy."
3. The words "with princes" are to be omitted as a gloss.
4. A copyist has added the words "the house."

PSALM CXIV.

THE NEW EXODUS.

Psalm 114, like 113 used at the beginning of the Pass-over service, was, in all probability, not originally a *Hallel*. But it is easy to see why it has been included. At the chief feast the episode of national history most in mind was the Exodus from Egypt, and the natural phenomena attendant upon the great emancipation must have been the ever-present subject of grateful reflection. The poem is of singularly beautiful and perfect construction. Omitting the glosses (vv. 2 and 8), it consists of two strophes (or rather *Strophe* and *Antistrophe*), each of the three trimeter couplets. These couplets have frequently been instanced as perfect examples of Hebrew parallelism of the synonymous kind.

I.

(*Strophe.*)¹

When Israel went forth from Egypt:

Jacob's house from a stammering people;²

The sea saw and it fled:

Jordan was backward turned;

The mountains skipped like rams:

Hills like lambs of the flock.

II.

(*Antistrophe.*)

What ailed thee, O sea, that thou fleddest:

That, Jordan, thou turnedst back?

That, mountains, ye skipped like rams:

Ye hills, like the lambs of the flock?

'Twas from the face of the Lord of the earth:

From the face of Eloah of Jacob.³

1. Like the preceding *Hallels* 114 is introduced with a *Hallelu-yah*.
2. V. 2 in the English versions is an obvious gloss, suggested by the reference to the "house of Jacob." It spoils the strophical arrangement and the sequence of thought:
"Judah became His sanctuary:
Israel His dominion."
3. V. 8 is similarly suggested and must be regarded as a gloss:
"Who turneth the rock to a water-pool:
The flint to fountains of water."

PSALM CXV.

A COMPOSITE PSALM.

Though united in the Gk. with 114 (and without the usual introductory *Hallelu-yah* in the Hb.) this psalm is not only independent but in itself composite. The first eight verses are a monotheistic protest very much in the vein of the deutero-Isaiah. Vv. 9-16 consist of a liturgical hymn for the use of priest and people and suitable as an appendix to most other psalms. The last two verses (17, 18) must be considered a gloss.

A.

Yahweh and Idols.

I.

Not to us, Yahweh, not unto us:
But unto Thy Name give glory.¹
Why do the nations say:
"Where now is their God?"

II.

Our God is in heaven above:²
Whatsoever He pleaseth He doeth.
Their idols are silver and gold:
Work of men's hands.

III.

Mouth have they and they speak not:
Eyes have they and they see not.
Ears have they and they hear not:
Nose have they and they smell not.

IV.

Hands have they and they feel not:
 Feet have they and they walk not.³
 Like unto them are their makers:
 Yea, all who in them do trust.

B.

Liturgical Hymn.

I.

V. O House⁴ of Israel, trust ye in Yahweh!
R. Their Help and their Shield is He.
V. O House of Aaron, trust ye in Yahweh!
R. Their Help and their Shield is He.
V. O Fearers of Yahweh, trust ye in Yahweh!
R. Their Help and their Shield is He.

II. (*Solo by Priest.*)

May Yahweh remember and bless!⁵
 May He bless the House of Israel!
 May He bless the House of Aaron!
 May He bless the Fearers of Yahweh,
 The small and the great!

III.

V. May Yahweh add unto you:
R. Unto you and your children!
V. Blessed be ye of Yahweh:
R. Maker of Heaven and Earth!

V. The Heavens appointed⁶ for Yahweh:

R. And the Earth for the sons of men!⁷ ^s

1. The words "because of Thy love, because of Thy truth," are a gloss taken over from Ps. 138:2.
2. The "above" is taken from the Gk. It is needed for the measure.
3. A glossator has added a repetition from the previous strophe: "they utter not with their throat."
4. Read, with the Gk.: "House of Israel."
5. The verbs are to be taken as *precative* rather than, as in the Gk., perfect.
6. Read, instead of *shāmayīm* (*heavens*), *sōmīm* (*appointed*).
7. Omit the *nāthan* (*he giveth*), as making the line too long.
8. A glossator has added the trimeter tetrastich:
 "The dead cannot praise Yahweh:
 Nor those who go down to Silence.
 But we will praise Yah,
 Henceforth and forever."

PSALM CXVI.

A THANKSGIVING.

In the Gk. this psalm, preceded by an Ἀλληλουιά, is divided into two, which are numbered 114 and 115. But the two parts (1-8 and 9-16) are manifestly sequent. Reconstructed, with the assistance of certain conjectural emendations and the omission of some obvious glosses, the psalm arranges itself into eight 4-lined strophes, each probably (with the exception of the last) ending in the refrain: "And on Yahweh's Name will I call." The fact that emphasis is laid upon the sacrificial aspect of the Temple worship suggests that the date is in the Greek period.

I.

I love Yahweh, my strength:

For He heareth the voice of entreaty:

For His ear unto me He inclineth:

And on Yahweh's Name¹ will I call.

II.

Cords of death encompassed me:

And the narrows of Sheol found me:

Yea, I found straitness and sorrow:

And on Yahweh's Name will I call.

III.

Ah me! O deliver my soul,

Yahweh, gracious and righteous!²

Yahweh, guard of the simple!

And on Yahweh's Name will I call.³

IV.

Return, my soul, to thy resting-place:
For Yahweh treateth thee bountifully;
From death He hath rescued my soul:⁴
And on Yahweh's Name will I call.

V.

I have trusted, though this I declare:
I have been greatly afflicted:
I said, Every man is deceitful;⁵
And on Yahweh's Name will I call.

VI.

What return shall I make unto Yahweh
For all His bounty toward me?
I will lift up the cup of salvation:
And on Yahweh's Name will I call.

VII.

Ah me! For I am Thy servant:
Thy servant, and son of Thy handmaid;
Thankofferings to Thee will I offer:
And on Yahweh's Name will I call.

VIII.

I will pay my vows unto Yahweh,
In the presence of all His people:⁶
In the courts of the House of Yahweh:
In the midst of thee, O Jerusalem.⁷

The true text of this psalm is exceedingly difficult to reconstruct, and the present version (which follows Briggs in the main) must be accepted with some scholarly caution.

It doubtless represents the original poem better than the generally received text. Peters speaks of some of the verses as being "mere notes for singers," while a German commentator speaks of the whole psalm as "gestopelter." It is plainly much influenced by other psalms, especially by 18. The opening words "I love" are evidently intended to have as their object the words of 18:2: "Yahweh, my strength."

1. By the alteration of a single letter we read "Name" instead of "days."
2. Here the gloss has been added: "Yea, our God is compassionate."
3. The words: "I was brought low and He saved me" must be considered as a gloss.
4. The line is expanded in the gloss: "Mine eyes from tears and my feet from falling: I will walk before Yahweh in the land of the living."
5. The language is softened by the interpolation of the words: "in my alarm."
6. Here a pentameter in Maccabean temper has been inserted: "Precious in the eyes of Yahweh is the death of His saints."
7. This line may have superseded the original refrain. There is also in the text a final *Hallelu-yah*.

PSALM CXVII.

GENERAL DOXOLOGY.

A single strophe, a trimeter tetrastich, possibly part of a larger poem, or perhaps intended as a "sacrificial praise-cry for the preceding liturgy." It is eminently suitable for the gathering at Jerusalem out of many nations and peoples. Like the Gloria in our use of the Psalter, it serves as the closing testimony to the divine qualities of love and faithfulness which move all men to the praise of Yahweh.

Praise Yahweh, ye nations:
Laud Him, all ye peoples.
For mighty on us is His love:
And Yahweh's truth is for ever.

PSALM CXVIII.

THE GREAT PROCESSIONAL.

This psalm, one of the most ritually organized in the whole of the Psalter, need not be considered as composite. It seems rather to represent a processional of priests, choirs, and people which divides itself naturally into two parts. A. (vv. 1-18) brings before us the procession, formed outside the walls, into Zion's city to the south gate of the Temple. B. (vv. 19-29) suggests the procession into the courts of the Temple, for the receiving of the priestly blessing (v. 26), and for participation in the offering of the sacrifice (27-29). The words of v. 27: "Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar" are to be taken as rubrical. To include them in the text spoils the strophical arrangement. Some have considered the whole poem as Maccabean, but it seems more natural to take it as composed for the dedication of the Second Temple. Cf. v. 22 with Zech. 4:7.

A.

To the Temple.

I. (*Leader and Chorus.*)

L. Give thanks to Yahweh because He is great!

C. For His love is for ever.

L. Now let the House of Israel say:

C. For His love is for ever.

L. Now let the House of Aaron say:

C. For His love is for ever.

L. Now let the Fearers¹ of Yahweh say:

C. For His love is for ever,

II. (*Solo.*)

From the straits² I called upon Yah:
 Yah in a broad place answered me.
 Yahweh is mine, I shall not fear:
 What can man do unto me?
 Yahweh is mine, even my helper:
 And I—I shall look on my haters.³

III. (*Leader and Chorus.*)

L. All peoples surrounded me.
C. In Yahweh's Name I will cut⁴ through them.
L. They surrounded me, yea, they surrounded me.
C. In Yahweh's Name I will cut through them.
L. As bees the honeycomb, they surrounded me.
C. In Yahweh's Name I will cut through them.

IV. (*Solo, in pentameter.*)

Thrusting, Thou hast thrust me to fall:
 And Yahweh helped me.
 My strength and my song was Yahweh:
 He to me was salvation.
 A slogan, a joy-shout, salvation,
 In the tents of the righteous!

V. (*Chorus.*)

Yahweh's right hand worketh valor!
 Yahweh's right hand is exalted!
 Yahweh's right hand worketh valor!

VI. (*Solo.*)

I shall not die: yea, I shall live:
 The works of Yahweh shall I tell.
 Chastening, Yah did chasten me:
 Yet to death He did not deliver me.

B.

In the Temple Courts.

I. (*Priests and Chorus.*)

P. Open me the gates of righteousness!
 I will enter them: I will praise Yah.

C. This is Yahweh's gate:
 The righteous shall enter therein.⁵

P. The stone the builders rejected
 Is now the top-stone of the tower.⁶

C. From Yahweh hath this come:
 It is marvellous in our eyes.

P. This is the day Yahweh hath made:
 Let us be glad and rejoice therein.

C. O Yahweh, deliver, we pray!
 Send, O Yahweh, prosperity!

II. (*The Priestly Blessing.*)

Blessed, in Yahweh's Name, be he that entereth!
 Out of Yahweh's house, blessed be ye!

III. (*Chorus.*)

Yahweh it is that giveth us light:⁷
 Thou art my God and I give Thee thanks:
 I will exalt Thee, my God.
 Praise ye Yahweh, for He is good:
 For His love is for ever.

1. I. e. the Proselytes.
2. Cf. 116: 3.
3. Here a glossator has interpolated the pentameter couplet:
 “To seek refuge in Yahweh is better than trusting in
 man:
 To seek refuge in Yahweh is better than trusting in
 princes.”
4. Some translate “cut them off” and see an allusion to the enforced circumcision of the Philistines by David.
5. Omit the gloss:
 “I will thank Thee, for Thou hast answered me and
 art become my salvation.”
6. Cf. Zech. 4: 7.
7. Here was kindled the sacrificial fire and immediately after the carcasses of the sacrificial victims were placed upon the altar. This explains the omitted rubric:
 “Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.”

PSALM CXIX.

THE ROSARY OF THE LAW.

Psalm 119 is an elaborate acrostic poem in praise of the Law. It is arranged in 22 sections corresponding with the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. In each section the initial letter of the successive eight verses is the same. There are other artificialities to be observed, such as the use of the name "Yahweh" 22 times, once for each section, and the employment of eight synonyms for the Law, generally in each section. These are: 1. *Torah* (Law); 2. *Dabhar* (Word); 3. *Imrah* (Saying); 4. *Mishpātim* (Judgments); 5. *Edūth* (Testimonies); 6. *Piqqūdim* (Precepts); 7. *Huqqim* (Statutes); 8. *Mitzvōth* (Commandments). The text has probably been corrupted here and there, but has, on the whole, come down to us in good shape. It is probable that the poem is the product of the period when the attempt to Hellenise Palestine provoked the Pharisaic movement in defence of the Law.

Aleph.

Happy are they whose way is blameless:
 And who walk in the Law of Yahweh.
 Happy are they who keep His Testimonies:
 Who seek Him with all their heart.
 Surely they do no evil:
 In His Ways they walk.
 Thou hast enjoined Thy Precepts:
 That I should keep them diligently.
 O that my ways were directed
 To keep Thy Statutes.
 Then should I not be ashamed:
 When I consider all Thy Commandments.

With an upright heart I will thank Thee :
In learning Thy righteous Judgments.
Thy Statutes I will observe :
Forsake me not utterly.

Beth.

How shall a youth keep pure his path ?
By taking heed after Thy Word.
With all my heart I have sought Thee :
From Thy Commandments let me not stray.
In my heart I have hid Thy Saying :
That I may not sin against Thee.
Blessed art Thou, O Yahweh :
Teach me Thy Statutes.
I will recount with my lips
All the Judgments of Thy mouth.
I delight in the way of Thy Testimonies :
As much as in all wealth.
I will meditate in Thy Precepts :
And seek after Thy paths.
I will find joy in Thy Statutes :
And will not forget Thy Word.

Gimel.

Deal bountifully with Thy servant and I shall live :
So shall I keep Thy Word.
Open mine eyes and I shall behold
Wondrous things out of Thy Law.
A stranger am I in the land :
Hide not Thy Commandments from me.
Crushed is my soul with longing
All the time for Thy Judgments.

Thou rebukest the proud, the arrogant,
Who from Thy Commandments do err.
Remove from me shame and reproach:
For I keep Thy Testimonies.
Though princes sit and speak against me,
On Thy Statutes Thy servant doth meditate.
My delight are Thy Testimonies:
They are my counsellors.

Daleth.

My soul doth cleave to the dust:
Quicken me after Thy Word.
My ways I recount and Thou answerest me:
To teach me Thy Statutes.
Make me understand the way of Thy Precepts:
That I may meditate on Thy wonders.
My soul faileth for heaviness:
Raise me up after Thy Word.
The way of lying put far from me:
Be gracious to me with Thy Law.
I have chosen the way of faithfulness:
I have set Thy Judgments before me.
I have clung to Thy Testimonies, Yahweh:
O do not put me to shame.
The way of Thy Commandments I run:
For Thou dost enlarge my heart.

He.

Teach me, Yahweh, the way of Thy Statutes:
That I keep it unto the end.
Make me understand how to keep Thy Law:
And with all my heart shall I keep it.

Make me walk in the way of Thy Commandments:
For in it is my delight.
Incline my heart unto Thy Testimonies:
And not unto covetousness.
Turn mine eyes from beholding vanity:
Quicken Thou me in Thy way.
Stablish to Thy servant Thy Saying:
Which is for those who fear Thee.
Remove my reproach which I fear:
For Thy Judgments are good.
Behold, I faint for Thy Precepts:
Quicken me in Thy righteousness.

Vaw.

Let Thy love come unto me, Yahweh:
Thy salvation after Thy Saying.
That I may answer those who insult me:
For in Thy Word have I trusted.
From my mouth snatch not utterly the word of truth:
For I on Thy Judgments am waiting.
And I shall observe Thy Law:
Always, for ever and ever.
So may I walk at large:
Because I have sought Thy Precepts.
So may I speak of Thy Testimonies:
Before kings and not be ashamed.
And in Thy Commandments I shall delight:
Which have been my love.
To Thy Commandments I lift up my hands:
And upon Thy Statutes will meditate.

Zayin.

Remember the Word unto Thy servant :
Upon which Thou hast led me to hope.
In my trouble this is my comfort :
That Thy Saying hath quickened me.
The proud have bitterly scoffed at me :
I have not declined from Thy Law.
I remember Thy Judgments of old :
And I, O Yahweh, was comforted.
Indignation seized me because of the wicked
Who have abandoned Thy Law.
Thy Statutes were my melodies
In the house of my pilgrimage.
In the night I remembered Thy name :
And Thy Law I observed.
Thus was it with me :
That I kept Thy Precepts.

Heth.

Yahweh is my portion :
I have said I will keep Thy Word.
With all my heart I entreated before Thee :
After Thy Saying be gracious to me.
I have considered my ways :
And I turn my feet to Thy Testimonies.
I make haste and delay not
To keep Thy Commandments.
The cords of the wicked encircled me :
But I did not forget Thy Law.
At midnight I rise to praise Thee :
Because of Thy righteous Judgments.

To Thy fearers I am companion:

And to those who keep Thy Precepts.

The earth, O Yahweh, is full of Thy love:

Teach me Thy Statutes.

Teth.

Thou hast dealt well with Thy servant,

O Yahweh, after Thy Word.

Teach me good judgment and knowledge:

For in Thy Commandments I trust.

I went astray before I was troubled:

But now I observe Thy Saying.

Good art Thou and Thou doest good:

Teach me Thy Statutes.

The proud forged a lie against me:

But with all my heart I keep Thy Precepts.

Gross is their heart, like wax:

But I delight in Thy Law.

It is good for me that I was afflicted:

That I might learn Thy Statutes.

Better to me is the Law of Thy mouth

Than thousands of gold and silver.

Yodh.

Thy hands have made me and fashioned me:

Give me understanding that I may learn Thy Com-
mandments.

They that fear Thee shall see me and rejoice:

Because I hope in Thy Word.

O Yahweh, I know that Thy Judgments are righteous:

And in faithfulness Thou hast afflicted me.

Let Thy love be for my comfort :
Because of Thy Saying to Thy servant.
Let Thy mercies come to me that I live :
For my delight is Thy Law.
Let the proud be shamed, for they dealt falsely with
me :
As for me, in Thy Precepts I meditate.
They that fear Thee will return unto me :
And they who know Thy Testimonies.
Let my heart be sound in Thy Statutes :
So that I be not ashamed.

Kaph.

My soul fainteth for Thy salvation :
I wait for Thy Word.
Mine eyes fail for Thy Saying :
Saying: When wilt Thou comfort me?
Though I be like a wine-skin in the smoke :
I do not forget Thy Statutes.
How many are the days of Thy servant?
When wilt Thou do Judgment on my pursuers?
The proud digged pits for me :
Which are not after Thy Law.
All Thy Commandments are faithful :
They pursue me with falsehood : O help me !
In the land they had nearly consumed me :
But I did not forsake Thy Precepts.
Quicken me after Thy love :
So shall I keep the Testimonies of Thy mouth.

Lamedh.

Forever, O Yahweh, Thy Word
Is established in heaven.
From age unto age Thy Faithfulness:—
Thou hast founded the earth that it stands.
To-day they stand after Thy Judgments:
For all are Thy servants.
Had not Thy Law been my delight,
Surely I had perished in mine affliction.
Never will I forget Thy Precepts:
For by them am I quickened.
I am Thine: O save me:
For I seek Thy Precepts.
The wicked lie in wait to destroy me:
I consider Thy Testimonies.
I see a limit to all perfection:
But Thy Commandments are very broad.

Mem.

O how I love Thy Law!
It is my meditation all the day.
Wiser than mine enemies Thy Commandments make
me:
For they are mine for ever.
I am wiser than all my teachers:
For Thy Testimonies are my meditation.
I have more understanding than my elders:
Because I keep Thy Precepts.
From every ill path have I kept my feet:
That I might keep Thy Word.

I turn not aside from Thy Judgments:
For Thou Thyself hast taught me.
How sweet to my palate is Thy Saying:
Sweeter than honey to my mouth.
From Thy Precepts I get understanding:
Therefore every false way I hate.

Nun.

Thy Word is a lamp to my feet:
And a light on my path.
I have sworn and I will perform it:
To observe Thy righteous Judgments.
I am very sorely afflicted:
Quicken me, Yahweh, after Thy Word.
Accept, Yahweh, the free-will offerings of my mouth:
And teach me Thy Judgments.
Continually I carry my life in my hand:
And I do not forget Thy Law.
The wicked have set me a trap:
But I strayed not from Thy Precepts.
Thy Testimonies are my heritage for ever:
For they are the joy of my heart.
I incline my heart to perform
Thy Statutes for ever and ever.

Samech.

Dissemblers I hate:
But Thy Law I love.
My shelter and shield art Thou:
In Thy Word I hope.

Depart from me, doers of evil:

That I may keep the Commandments of God.
After Thy Saying, sustain me that I live:

And make me not ashamed for my hope.
Hold Thou me up and I shall be safe:

Let me consider Thy Statutes for ever.
Thou despisest all who stray from Thy Statutes:
For their deceit is in vain.

Thou rejectest the wicked of the land like dross:
Therefore I love Thy Testimonies.

My flesh trembleth for fear of Thee:
But I am not afraid of Thy Judgments.

'Ayin.

I have done Judgment and righteousness:

Leave me not unto mine oppressors.
Pledge me Thy Word for good:

Let not the proud oppress me.
Mine eyes faint for Thy salvation:
And for the Saying of Thy righteousness.

Deal with Thy servant after Thy love:
And teach me Thy Statutes.

I am Thy servant; give me understanding:
That I may know Thy Testimonies.

It is time for Yahweh to act:
They have broken Thy Law.

Therefore I love Thy Commandments,
Better than gold and than fine gold.

I esteem all Thy Precepts as right:
Every false path I hate.

Pe.

Wonderful are Thy Testimonies:
Therefore my soul keepeth them.
The opening of Thy Word giveth light:
Giving understanding unto the simple.
I opened by mouth and panted:
I longed for Thy Commandments.
Turn and be gracious unto me:
To Thy Name's lovers after Thy Judgment.
Establish my steps by Thy Saying:
And let no wrong have power over me.
Redeem me from the oppression of man:
That I may observe Thy Precepts.
Let Thy face on Thy servant lighten:
And teach me Thy Statutes.
Mine eyes run down with streams of water
Over those who keep not Thy Law.

Tsade.

Righteous art Thou, O Yahweh:
And upright Thy Judgments.
Thou hast ordered Thy Testimonies in righteousness:
And in faithfulness exceedingly.
My zeal hath even consumed me:
For my foes forget Thy Word.
Very pure is Thy Saying:
And Thy servant loveth it.
Little am I and despised:
But I do not forget Thy Precepts.
Thy righteousness is righteous for ever:
And Thy Law is truth.

Trouble and anguish befall me:

But Thy Commandments are my delight.

Righteous are Thy Testimonies for ever:

Give me understanding that I may live.

Qoph.

I call with my whole heart: answer me!

I will keep Thy Statutes, O Yahweh.

I call on Thee: do Thou save me:

That I may keep Thy Testimonies.

I arise at dawn and call for help:

I wait for Thy Word.

Mine eyes prevent the night-watches:

To meditate on Thy Saying.

Hear my voice after Thy love:

After Thy Judgments revive me, O Yahweh.

They who pursue after mischief draw nigh:

They are far from Thy Law.

Thou, O Yahweh, art near:

And all Thy Commandments are truth.

Of Thy Testimonies I have known long since

That Thou hast founded them for ever.

Resh.

Behold my affliction and rescue me:

For I do not forget Thy Law.

Plead Thou my cause and avenge me:

Quicken me after Thy Saying.

Salvation is far from the wicked:

For they do not seek Thy Statutes.

Thy compassions are many, O Yahweh:

Quicken me after Thy Judgments.

My pursuers and foes are many:
But I swerve not from Thy Testimonies.
I see the apostates and loath them:
Who keep not Thy Saying.
Behold how I love Thy Precepts:
Quicken me, Yahweh, after Thy love.
The sum of Thy Word is truth:
And all Thy Judgments righteous for ever.

Shin.

Princes persecute me without cause:
But my heart is in awe of Thy Word.
I have delight over Thy Saying:
As one that findeth great spoil.
Lying I hate and abhor:
Thy Law do I love.
Seven times daily I praise Thee:
Because of Thy righteous Judgments.
The lovers of Thy Law have great peace:
And nothing shall cause them to stumble.
For Thy salvation, O Yahweh, I wait:
And I keep Thy Commandments.
My soul keepeth Thy Testimonies.
And I love them exceedingly.
Thy Precepts I keep and Thy Testimonies:
For all my ways are before Thee.

Tau.

Let my cry come before Thee, O Yahweh:
Give me understanding after Thy Word.
Let my entreaty come before Thee:
Deliver me, after Thy Saying.

My lips shall speak forth praise:

Because Thou didst teach me Thy Statutes.

My tongue shall sing of Thy Saying:

For all Thy Commandments are righteous.

Let Thy hand be for my helping:

Because I have chosen Thy Precepts.

I long for Thy salvation, O Yahweh:

And Thy Law is my delight.

Let my soul live and praise Thee:

And let Thy Judgments help me.

As a lost sheep go I astray:

But I do not forget Thy Commandments.

THE PILGRIM PSALTER.

CXX-CXXXIV.

OUT OF THE smaller collections which, as we have seen, came to be incorporated in the completed Psalter none speaks more directly "up to the heart" than the series of "Traveller's Songs" which are known to us as "The Songs of the Going up," or "Songs of Ascent." Embedded among psalms which are unmistakably of priestly authorship and composed with ritualistic intent, these poems are as plainly of popular origin, reflecting first-hand emotions and a certain passion which glows even through the many reminiscences of, and quotations from, the older poetry.

The original stimulus to this emotion is, no doubt, to be found in the return of the Jewish exiles from the captivity in Babylon. As the pilgrims wended their way from the flat plains of the Euphrates valley towards "the hills of Israel," they must have run through the entire gamut of feeling from the recording of their woes as captives to the expression of the ecstasy of freedom. But there must also have been many subsequent occasions when the journey back to the homeland would tend to call forth the same mingled strains of longing and of exultation. Possibly the families

which, for the advantages of commerce, had settled in the East, found the opportunity at many an annual celebration to use again the familiar songs.

Thus songs originally intended to beguile the journey across the desert may have also served to lighten the toil of the yearly caravan pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Nay, more—they may quite well have served as processions up the steps to the very courts of the Temple. I say nothing here of the theory which explains the title of the songs by the stair-like construction of the verse.

In any case, through much and manifold use, the Pilgrim Psalms have descended to us and have made manifest their meaning to the Christian as well as to the Jew. For the eternal pilgrim in the heart of man is forever crying out for the Delectable Mountains of the ideal, even though lapsing often contentedly enough to find comfort among the flesh-pots of "the far country."

It is not certain how far we may insist upon the unity or the continuity of these songs. The first steps, however, are obviously and naturally sequent. They create for the soul an ascent upon which it seems well worth while to insist. They mark the progress of the pilgrim from the land of exile to the joy of the Divine Presence.

PSALM CXX.

OUT OF THE FAR COUNTRY.

The pilgrim expresses his gratitude for having been delivered from exile. But his heart is still sore and bleeding from experience in the tents of the ungodly. The poem is in two 8-lined strophes in elegiac, or echoing, rhythm.

I.

Unto Yahweh in my straitness I called:
 And Yahweh¹ did answer me.
 Deliver my soul from false lip:
 From tongue of deceit.
 What shall He give thee, and what shall He add,²
 O tongue of deceit?
 Darts of a warrior, hardened
 With embers of broom.

II.

Woe unto me that I wandered
 (Through the land of)³ Meshech!
 (Woe unto me)³ that I sojourned
 Mid the tents of Kedar!
 Overmuch hath my soul had her dwelling
 With the hater of peace.
 Peace was I, and yet when I said (it)—
 They were for war.

1. The "Yahweh" is here transferred from v. 2. The change is needed for the metre.

2. The second *l'ka* (*to thee*) is omitted as a gloss.

3. These words must be supplied to complete the metre and the parallelism.
4. The word which is here translated "Meshech" is in the Gk. rendered ἐμακρύνθη. The parallelism is better preserved by retaining the "Meshech."

PSALM CXXI.

THE HILLS OF HOME.

The pilgrim's sight of "the mountains of Israel" quickens his desire to reach his goal. He asks by what strength he may hope to surmount the dangers still to be encountered. A voice within assures him of Yahweh's constant providence as "the Keeper of Israel." Strophically and metrically the poem resembles the preceding.

I.

I lift up mine eyes to the hills:

Whence cometh my help?

My help is from Yahweh,

Maker of heaven and earth.

May He not suffer thy³ foot to totter!

May not thy³ Keeper drowse!

²He shall not drowse: He shall not slumber:

Keeper of Israel.

II.

Yahweh, thy Keeper,¹ thy shade,

Upon thy right hand!

In the day-time the sun shall not strike thee:

Nor moon in the night.

Yahweh shall keep thee from every ill:

Thy soul He shall keep.

He¹ shall keep thy going and thy coming,

Henceforth and for ever.

1. For metrical reasons the "Yahweh" must here be regarded as a gloss.
2. Omit the *hinneh* (*behold*) as a gloss.
3. In this verse Briggs suggests that "thy foot" and "thy Keeper" should be altered to "my foot" and "my Keeper," but it seems better to leave the strophe antiphonal and to think of vv. 2 and 4 as the answers to vv. 1 and 3.

PSALM CXXII.

THE COMPACTED CITY.

The pilgrim enters Jerusalem and rejoices in the strength of "the compacted city." He finds the secret of this strength in the unity of the tribes in the House of Yahweh. He pleads for the peace which shall crown the loyalty of his "brethren and friends" to one another and to God. The poem has the same metrical and strophical arrangement as the preceding.

I.

I rejoiced when they said unto me:
"To Yahweh's house we will go!"
Standing (at last) are our feet
In thy gates, O Jerusalem.
Jerusalem, built as a city
That is compacted together:
Whither go up the tribes,
The tribes of Yah.¹

II.

Ask ye peace for Jerusalem:—
"May thy lovers have ease!"
Let there be peace on thy ramparts,
Ease in thy palaces!"
For the sake of my brethren and friends,
Peace let me bespeak!
For the sake of the house of Yahweh, our God,
Let me seek for thee good!

1. Omit the explanatory gloss: "An ordinance for Israel to give thanks to the Name of Yahweh, because there (i.e. at Jerusalem) stood the seat of judgment." This was merely intended as a footnote to explain the duty of going up to Jerusalem. This is the only alteration of the text needed.

PSALM CXXIII.

THE MASTER'S EYE.

Out of the joy of security in the Divine Presence and out of the privilege of service springs the pilgrim's *Prayer of Humble Access*. Out of slavery to the insolent he has passed into the service of God in whose eyes he may lift his own. The original poem has but one 8-lined strophe on the same metric plan as the preceding.

Unto Thee I lift up mine eyes,
 The Dweller in the Heavens!
 Behold, like the eyes of slaves,
 To the hands of their lords:
 Like the eyes of a maid-servant,
 To the hand of her mistress,
 Are our eyes to Yahweh, our God,
 Till that He pity us.¹

1. A later "pilgrim," taking his cue from the word "pity," in another measure (a trimeter pentastich), and in a somewhat less confident mood, has added his gloss in the importunate prayer:

"Pity us, Yahweh, pity us!
 For greatly hath shame sated us:
 Greatly hath our soul been sated,
 With the scorn of the careless,
 With the shame of the insolent."

PSALM CXXIV.

RETROSPECT AND ASSURANCE.

Out of the memory of deliverances in the days of long ago the pilgrim strengthens his trust in Yahweh as a present help in trouble. The metre and strophical arrangement are the same.¹

I.

Had it not been Yahweh who was ours—
 Let Israel now say—
 Had it not been Yahweh who was ours,
 When they² rose up against us,
 Then alive had they swallowed us,
 In the heat of their wrath:³
 Then the waters had flooded us,
 The waters that boil.⁴

II.

Blessed be Yahweh who delivered us not
 A prey to their teeth!
 Our life like a sparrow escaped
 From the trap of the fowlers.
 (Lo),⁵ the trap was shattered,
 And we—we escaped.
 In Yahweh's Name is our help,
 Maker of Heaven and Earth.

1. The title *To David* is unwarranted and is absent from the Gk.

2. The word *ʿĀdhām* (*Man*) is a gloss, the insertion of a scribe who thought that the sentence needed a subject.

3. The word *bānū* (*against us*) is a gloss, the repetition of the previous verse ending.
4. At the end of Strophe I occur in the text the two half lines: "The stream had gone over our soul: then had gone over our soul." These words are almost unconscious repetitions of familiar phrases which break the measure and the strophic arrangement.
5. The word *Hinneḥ* (*Behold*) is here supplied to complete the measure.

Beautiful technical features of this psalm are the step-like structure of Strophe I and the introverted parallelism (*a b b a*) of Strophe II. The general assonance of the lines ending in *ānu* is also to be noted.

PSALM CXXV.

THE SECURITY OF THE FAITHFUL.

The pilgrim takes courage from Zion's girdle of protecting hills. The poem consists of a single strophe in the metre of the preceding *Songs of Ascent*. Several glosses are noted below. These are pious ejaculations and the reflections of a copyist who lives in less happy times than those of the original psalmist. The enemy is no longer the pagan but the unfaithful Jew. The true Israel is contrasted with the false, as by St. Paul (cf. Gal. 6:6). These equivocal Israelites are described as walking in "zigzags." Therefore God will "sweep them away" with the "makers of the iniquity" (the idol-makers).

They who trust in Yahweh are like Zion's mount:—
 It shall never be moved.
 Jerusalem forever doth sit,¹
 With the hills round about her.
 And Yahweh surroundeth His people,
 Henceforth and forever,
 That the rod of the wicked may rest not²
 On the lot of the righteous.^{3 4 5}

1. The punctuation has here been altered by attaching the words "it sitteth forever" to the second verse, connected grammatically with "Jerusalem" as subject.
2. Briggs here reads *yaniah* instead of *yanuh* and translates causatively: "He (God) maketh not the rod of the wicked to rest on the lot of the righteous."
3. Here a gloss has been inserted, as follows: "That the righteous put not forth unto evil their hands."

4. Vv. 4-5a must also be regarded as a gloss. They run as follows: "Do good, Yahweh, to the good and to the upright in their hearts; but those inclined to their crooked (zigzag) ways—Yahweh shall make them go with the idol-makers."
5. The concluding benediction, "Peace be upon Israel" is a pious addition.

PSALM CXXVI.

"WEEPING AND REAPING."

The pilgrim learns that the fruit of past pain in the experience of national deliverance is ground for confidence as to the future. Present weeping is to the faithful the pledge of future reaping. The strophes are complementary and beautifully symmetrical.

I.

When Yahweh turned Zion's returning,
 We were like dreamers.
 Filled then with joy was our mouth:
 And with shouting our tongue.
 Then midst the heathen they said:
 "Great things He hath done!"¹
 Great things with us Yahweh hath done:
 So are we glad.

II.

O Yahweh, turn our returnings,
 Like streams in the South-land!²
 They who with weeping sow seed
 With joy may they reap!
 Though one go and weep as he goeth,
 Bearing the seed,³
 When he cometh, with joy may he come,
 Bearing his sheaves.

1. The "Yahweh" and the "with them" of this line are explanatory insertions by a scribe, needless and destructive of the metre.

2. "South-land" is the translation of "Negeb," the steppe land towards Beersheba, dry in summer and transformed by the filling of the wadis with the fertilizing freshets of the spring.
3. The word *meshek* (*load?*) is not represented in the Gk. and is beside of very doubtful meaning. It is omitted as an insertion.

PSALM CXXVII.

A.

(Vv. 1-2)

Two separate and unrelated songs are included under the one number, 127. In A. (vv. 1-2) we find the pilgrim, with a faith almost approaching a kind of fatalism, expressing his confidence in the Divine protection, as something independent of his own exertions. To the title *A Song of Ascents* has in this instance been added *To Solomon*. It furnishes an interesting illustration of the methods of those who assigned the psalms to particular authors. The reference to the building of "the house" (under the mistaken notion that the Temple is here meant) and the use of the phrase, "His beloved" (suggesting the Solomonic name "Jedidiah," "the Beloved of Yah") are responsible.

If Yahweh build not the house,
 Vainly its builders toil.¹
If Yahweh keep not the city,
 Vainly the keeper waketh.
Vain are your early risings,
 Rest long delayed,—
O eaters of bread, who suffer,—
 He giveth while His loved one sleepeth.²

1. The word *bō* (*on it*) is omitted as a gloss.

2. The word is adverbial and is correctly translated "while sleeping."

B.

(Vv. 3-5)

THE FAMILY.

The pilgrim expresses his gratitude to God for a large family as a sign of the Divine blessing and as a source of strength in the community.

Lo, an heritage from Yahweh are sons:¹
 A reward is the fruit of the womb.
 Like darts in the hand of a hero,
 Even so are the sons of youth.
 Happy the hero² who filleth
 With them his quiver.
 Such have no shame when they speak
 With foes in the gate.

1. Briggs omits the word *bānim* (*sons*), as making the line too long. If the line is too long, it might be preferable to omit the "Yahweh," and read: "Lo, sons are an heritage, a reward is the fruit of the womb," thus improving the parallelism.
2. The Gk. omits the *gebher* (*hero*), leaving the line: "Happy he who filleth."

PSALM CXXVIII.

THE HOLY FAMILY.

The pilgrim sings the happiness of the family which lives in the fear of Yahweh. This is a short song, suggested by the preceding, to which several glossators have added reflections adapting it to the general desire for the prosperity of the Holy City. It may be more than fancy which sees a play upon words in the association of "house" and "sons," since both words come from the root *bānāh* (*to build*).

Happy be all¹ who fear Yahweh:

Who walk in His way!

Yea,² the toil of thy hands thou shalt eat:

All happiness³ and good be thine!

Thy wife be a fruit-bearing vine,

In the midst⁴ of thy house!

Thy sons like shoots of the olive-trees,

Around thy table!^{5 6 7}

1. The Gk. uses the plural, so I have given the collective sense to the passage and translated: "all who fear Yahweh."
2. The Hebrew *kî* is to be rendered affirmatively, so I translate it "Yea."
3. The word is literally "happinesses," so may be more or less adequately translated: "All happiness."
4. The Hebrew is literally: "in the inner apartments of thy house."
5. A first glossator adds to the song the words: "Behold, thus shall be blessed the man who feareth Yahweh."

6. Mindful of the general theme of the whole collection of pilgrim songs, a second glossator adds: "May Yahweh bless thee from Zion, and mayest thou see the good of Jerusalem the days of thy life, and mayest thou see thy children's children."
7. As in Psalm 125, a still later scribe completes the poem with the pious wish: "Peace be on Israel!"

PSALM CXXIX.

THE HATERS OF ZION.

The pilgrim dwells upon the sure fate of those who hate Zion. He recalls the punishment of past oppressors and reflects upon the doom of all such at the hands of God.

I.

Greatly straitened they me from my youth:
 Now may Israel say.
 Greatly straitened they me from my youth:
 But prevailed not against me.
 On my back the plowers did plow:
 Long made their furrows.¹
 Yahweh, the righteous, hath cut
 The cords² of the wicked.

II.

Ashamed and turned back let them be:
 All the haters of Zion!
 Let them be like the grass of the house-tops,
 Which, ere one pluck³ it, is withered!
 Wherewith filleth not his hand the reaper:
 Nor his bosom the binder.
 And they say not—they that pass by—
 “The blessing of Yahweh be yours!”⁴

-
1. The translation “furrows” is doubtful, in view of the Gk. The Hebrew word is *ā. λ.*
 2. The rendering “cords” is also doubtful, but nothing better has been suggested.
 3. The word here translated “pluck” may signify “draw out (the scythe).”
 4. A pious copyist has added the blessing: “We bless you in the Name of Yahweh.”

PSALM CXXX.

"DE PROFUNDIS."

The pilgrim waits on Yahweh in a time of deep distress, with the confidence of a little child reposing on a mother's love. The poem is a beautiful illustration of the *qinah*, or elegiac, measure, with its echo-rhythm. The emendations of the text are neither numerous nor violent, consisting mainly of somewhat slight additions made by a pious scribe.

I.

From the deeps I call Thee, O Yahweh:

¹Hark to my voice!

O let Thine ears be attent

To the voice of my groaning!

If iniquities, Yah, Thou shouldest mark,

²Who then should stand?

For with Thee is the pardon,

Because of Thy Name.³

II.

I am waiting, my soul is waiting,⁴—

My soul toward Yahweh,—

More than the watchers for dawn,

Than watchers for dawn.⁵

For with Yahweh is kindness:

With Him is⁶ redemption;

And He shall Israel redeem

From all his iniquities.

1. The 'Adonai (*Lord*) is a gloss on the *Yahweh* of the preceding line.
2. The 'Adonai is also to be omitted as a gloss in these lines.
3. This line is supplied from the Gk.: "ἐνεκεν τοῦ ονόματός σου."
4. Omit the gloss: "And to His word is my hope."
5. The words: "Let Israel trust in *Yahweh*" are also an addition, the wish of a pious copyist.
6. The word *Harbeh* (*greatly*) makes the line too long and must be considered a gloss.

PSALM CXXXII.

"THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID."

Psalm 132, though entitled *A Song of Ascents*, has more of the appearance of a Temple hymn. The psalmist prays for the House of Yahweh and the House of David. He asks for the fulfilment of the Davidic covenant. The poem is in four 8-lined strophes, in the elegiac measure. A Maccabean glossator has added a quatrain in trimeter.

I.

Remember, O Yahweh, to David
All his affliction.
How he swore unto Yahweh a vow:
To the Strong One of Jacob:
"If I come to the tent of my house,¹
To the couch of my bed,
Till I find out for Yahweh a place,
For the Strong One of Jacob!"

II.

Behold, we heard it in Ephrath:
In the fields of Jaar we found it.
Let us enter into His dwelling:
Let us fall at His footstool!
Arise to Thy resting-place, Yahweh,
Thou and the Ark of Thy strength!
Then shall Thy priests put on righteousness:
And Thy saints shall rejoice.²

III.

Yahweh sware unto David,—
 A truth wherefrom He will turn not:
 "Of thy body's fruit will I set
 For thee on a throne.
 If thy sons keep My covenant,
 And My laws which I teach them,
 Then their sons for ever
 For thee shall sit throned."

IV.

For Yahweh Zion hath chosen:
 For His dwelling desired it:
 "This is My rest for ever:
 Here will I dwell.
 Her provision—greatly I'll bless it:
 Her poor will I satisfy;
 Her priests will I clothe with salvation:
 And her saints shall rejoice."³

-
1. A gloss has been inserted: "If I give sleep to mine eyes, to mine eyelids slumber."
 2. Here has been interpolated another gloss, borrowed from II Ch. 6:42: "For the sake of David, Thy servant, turn not away the face of Thy Messiah." This is plainly a Maccabean prayer on behalf of the ruler then claiming Davidic authority.
 3. Here comes a Maccabean gloss: "There shall I make sprout a horn for David: I have ordained a lamp for my Messiah. His enemies will I clothe with shame: But upon him his crown shall blossom."

PSALM CXXXIII.

BROTHERLY LOVE.

The pilgrim at the Feast feels the ideal unity of Israel and its blessedness. The psalm is entitled *To David*. The mere mention of Zion was sufficient to suggest Davidic authorship to the editor.

Behold, how good and how pleasant
 The dwelling of brethren together!
Like precious oil on the head,
 Running down on the beard:¹
Like the dew of Hermon descending
 On the mountains of Zion;
There Yahweh commanded the blessing,—
 Life henceforth and forever.

1. A gloss has here been inserted: "Even the beard of Aaron, that went down to the edge of his robe." A reminiscence of Lev. 8:30 ff. invited this allusion to the priesthood. A Haggadah says that two drops of the holy anointing oil hang for ever from the beard of Aaron like two pearls, the emblems of atonement and peace.

PSALM CXXXIV.

GOOD-BYE GREETINGS.

The pilgrim joins in the closing night-watch service of the Feast and prepares to return home in the strength of God's assurance of blessing from Zion. Possibly the first three lines of this psalm is the blessing of the departing pilgrims by the priest. The last verse would then be a praise-shout from the whole assembly blessing the priest in return. This would make a very fitting finale to the great occasion.

Behold, bless ye Yahweh,
All servants of Yahweh!
Who stand in the House of Yahweh:
The courts of the House of our God.¹
By night lift your hands to the Sanctuary:
And bless ye Yahweh.
Yahweh shall bless thee from Zion,
Maker of Heaven and Earth.

1. This line is taken from the Gk.: "ἐν ἀνλᾷς δικου Θεοῦ ἡμῶν."
It is needed both for the measure and the parallelism.

End of the Pilgrim Psalter.

PSALM CXXXV.

A HALLEL.

Psalm 135 is one of two Hallel's with which the final collection in the Psalter commences. It is a Levitical hymn which makes large use of other psalms and of other passages in the Old Testament. There are many glosses, which are either amplifications of statement or else reminiscences of other parts of Scripture. The original psalm seems to have consisted of three 6-lined trimeter strophes.

I.

Praise ye the Name of Yahweh!

Praise, O ye servants of Yahweh!

Ye who stand in the House of Yahweh:

In the courts of the House of our God!

Praise ye Yah, for He is good:

Harp ye His Name, for it is sweet! ^{1 2 3 4}

II.

Who smote the first-born of Egypt:

From man unto cattle:⁵

Who smote many nations:

And slew mighty kings:⁶

And gave them their land for an heritage:

An heritage for Israel, His people.^{7 8}

III.

House of Israel, bless ye Yahweh!

House of Aaron, bless ye Yahweh!

House of Levi, bless ye Yahweh!

Ye Fearers of Yahweh, bless ye Yahweh!

Bless ye Yahweh from Zion:

Who dwelleth at Jerusalem!

1. V. 4 is a gloss, from Deut. 7:6: "For Yah chose Jacob for Himself: Israel for His possession."
2. V. 5 is a gloss, from Ex. 18:11: "For I know that Yahweh is great: And our Lord above all gods."
3. V. 6 is a gloss, from Ps. 115:3: "All that Yahweh pleaseth He doeth in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps."
4. V. 7 is a gloss, from Jer. 10:13: "Who raiseth clouds from the ends of the earth, and lightnings to bring rain He maketh, bringing the winds out of His treasures."
5. V. 9 is a gloss of specification: "Who sent signs and wonders into the midst of thee, Egypt, upon Pharaoh and all his servants."
6. V. 11 is a gloss, from Ps. 136:19-20: "Sihon, king of the Amorite, and Og, the king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan."
7. Vv. 13-14 is a gloss, from Deut. 32:36: "Thy Name, Yahweh, is for ever; Yahweh, Thy remembrance is from age to age. For Yahweh shall judge His people and have pity on His servants."
8. Vv. 15-18 is a gloss, from Ps. 115:4-8: "The idols of the nations," etc.

PSALM CXXXVI.

THE GREAT HALLEL.

In its present form Psalm 136 is a liturgical composition in which the congregation joins with the priest, or the choir, in a kind of litany, or rather an ascription of praise for God's wondrous works on their behalf. The poem commences with a threefold thanksgiving (vv. 1-3) and closes with a formula of thanksgiving in a single line (v. 26). The body of the psalm consists of 22 (the number of letters in the alphabet) reasons for thanksgiving in a detailed reference to God's doings. These are apparently recited by the priest, or sung by the choir, while the people, after each separate recital, raise the Praise-shout: "For His love is for ever."

I.

Give thanks unto Yahweh, because He is good!

(*Refrain.*) For His love is for ever.

Give thanks to the God of gods!

For His love is for ever.

Give thanks to the Lord of lords!

For His love is for ever.

II.

Who doeth great wonders:

For His love is for ever.

Who made the heavens by wisdom:

For His love is for ever.

Who stretched out the earth over the waters:

For His love is for ever.

Who made the great lights:

For His love is for ever.

The sun to govern the day:

For His love is for ever.

The moon and the stars to govern the night:

For His love is for ever.

Who smote Egypt with their first-born:

For His love is for ever.

Who led out Israel from their midst:

For His love is for ever.

By a mighty hand and an outstretched arm:

For His love is for ever.

Who parted asunder the Sea of Reeds:

For His love is for ever.

Who made Israel cross through its midst:

For His love is for ever.

And cast Pharaoh and his host into the Sea of
Reeds:

For His love is for ever.

Who led His people in the wilderness:

For His love is for ever.

And He smote great kings:

For His love is for ever.

Yea, He smote famous kings:

For His love is for ever.

Sihon, king of the Amorites:

For His love is for ever.

And Og, king of Bashan:

For His love is for ever.

And gave their land for an heritage:

For His love is for ever.

An heritage for Israel, His servant:

For His love is for ever.

Who in our abasement remembered us:
 For His love is for ever.
 And rescued us from our enemies:
 For His love is for ever.
 Who giveth food to all flesh:
 For His love is for ever.

III.

Praise ye the God of heaven:
 For His love is for ever.

So far as is apparent, the text has come down to us without glosses. The poem is composed after the manner of *The Song of the Three Children* and consists of liturgical versicles (many of them quotations from other parts of Scripture) to which the ritual cry of the thankoffering is added as a refrain.

PSALM CXXXVII.

"BY THE RIVERS."

The former captives look back to the time when their captors asked them to sing the songs of Zion. They remember bitterly the ill-will of the Edomites and their share in the day of their humiliation. The "Babylon" of Strophe I and the "Daughter of Babylon" of Strophe II are the insertion of a glossator who had forgotten the prominence of the Edomites in the tragedy of the Captivity. The psalm consists of three pentameter tetrastichs, arranged in the regular *qinah*, or elegiac, measure. In the original the prolonged wail of the *ēnū* and *ānū* sounds at the line endings is particularly characteristic.

I.

By the rivers,¹ there we sat down:

Yea, and we wept.²

In the midst thereof, on the poplar³ trees,

Hung we our harps.

For there they required of us, even our captors,

Words of a song.

Yea, said our plunderers: "Sing ye unto us

Of Zion's songs!"

II.

Oh, Yahweh's song how shall we sing

In an alien land?

Jerusalem, if thee I forget,

Lost be my right hand!

My tongue, let it cleave to my palate,

If I remember thee not!

If I lift not Jerusalem up

To the height of my joy!

III.

Recall to the sons of Edom

Jerusalem's day:—

How they cried: "Lay it bare! Lay it bare!

Yea, to its base!"⁴

Happy are they who repay thee

Thy dealing with us!

Happy who seizeth and dasheth

Thy young 'gainst the rock!

1. Omit "Bäbel," as in v. 8. The insertion is the work of a glossator who felt unwilling that the name of the chief oppressor of Jerusalem should be left out. The poem seems to come from a time not very long after the Destruction of Jerusalem.
2. Omit the gloss of explanation: "When we remembered Zion."
3. "Poplars," as in Is. 15:7; 44:4.
4. Omit the gloss: "Daughter of Babylon, waster," for the reason noted above. It, moreover, spoils the measure.

PSALM CXXXVIII.

A THANKSGIVING.

A Psalm, to David. Psalm 138 probably belongs to the Persian period, subsequently to the time of Nehemiah. It is possibly a general Praise-shout, introductory to the final Davidic liturgy. It contains a number of reminiscences of earlier psalms and there are several glosses which are pointed out below. Originally most of the lines (possibly all) ended assonantly with the syllable *kā*. This assonance is shown by the underlining of the pronoun.

I.

With all my heart do I thank *Thee*.¹

Before the gods will I harp to *Thee*.

I will worship toward *Thy* holy shrine:

And will praise *Thy* Name for *Thy* kindness:

Yea, *Thy* Name for all *Thy* faithfulness:

For Thou exaltest *Thy* word over all.²

II.

All kings of the earth give *Thee* thanks:

For they hear the words of *Thy* mouth.

They shall sing in *Thy* ways, O Yahweh:³

For, Yahweh, great is *Thy* glory!³

For Yahweh is high, yet regardeth the lowly:

And considereth the proud from afar.⁴

III.

Though I walk in the midst of trouble:⁵

Thou sendest *Thine* hand o'er⁶ mine enemies.

Yea, with *Thy* right hand Thou savest me:

For me are *Thy* benefits, Yahweh.

Yahweh, *Thy* love is for ever:

Forsake not the work of *Thy* hands.

1. The Gk. here inserts: "Because Thou hast heard the words of my mouth."
2. A glossator inserts here: "In the day that I called Thou didst answer me: Thou enlargest my soul with strength." The gloss conflicts both with the assonance and the sense of the passage.
3. The assonance is preserved here by taking the "Yahweh" as vocative and translating: "Thy ways . . . Thy glory."
4. These two lines are uncertain. Briggs (for the sake of the assonance) translates: "For exalted, Yahweh, they see Thee: And, lofty from afar they know Thee."
5. A gloss adds (against the measure): "Thou revivest me."
6. A gloss here interpolates the word *'aph* (*anger*), making the line run: "O'er the anger of mine enemies."

PSALM CXXXIX.

THE DIVINE SPIRIT.

To the Director, to David, a Psalm. In spite of its title, this psalm is one of the latest in the Psalter. The language is obscured by the use of Aramaisms which in places make the translation extremely difficult. There is no need (with Briggs) to regard the psalm as composite, but the vv. 19-22 (quite out of key with the body of the poem) are the vindictive addition of a Maccabean editor. Not to leave the psalm on this note, however, he (or a subsequent glossator) has sought to return to the earlier theme with the closing verse. Several glosses in the poem itself are pointed out in the notes.

I.

Yahweh, Thou hast searched me:

And Thou hast known me.

Thou knowest my sitting and my rising:

Thou discernest my thoughts from afar.

II.

My path and my bed Thou measurest:

Thou art familiar with all my ways.

There is no word in my tongue:

Behold, Yahweh, Thou knowest all of it.

III.

Behind and before Thou enfoldest me:

And layest upon me Thy hand.

Too wonderful for me is this knowledge:

Too lofty and I cannot reach it.

IV.

Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?
And whither flee from Thy presence?
If I climb to the heavens Thou art there:
Or bed me in Sheol, behold Thee!

V.

If I lift up the wings of the dawn:
If I dwell at the back of the sea:
Even there shall Thy hand guide me:
And there shall Thy right hand hold me.

VI.

If I say: Surely darkness shall hide me:
Then the night about me is light.
Darkness makes it not dark for Thee:
And the night doth shine as the day.¹

VII.

For Thou hast fashioned my vitals:
In my mother's womb Thou didst form me.²
From Thee my bones are not hid:
Which Thou didst fashion in secret.³

VIII.

My substance Thine eyes did see:
All in Thy book was written.
Days were inscribed, pre-ordained,
When as yet there was none of them.

IX.

And to me how precious Thy thoughts!
 O how great, O God, is the sum of them!
 If I count, they are more than the sands:
 I awake and am still with Thee.^{4 5}

1. Omit the gloss: "The darkness and light are both alike."
2. V. 14 is a gloss: "I give thanks to Thee for the awful wonders Thou hast wrought: wonderful are Thy works, as I well know."
3. A gloss of expansion has been inserted: "Curiously wrought in the depths of the earth." Bp. Lowth (*Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*) observes: "The author uses a metaphor derived from the most subtle art of the Phrygian workman. 'When I was formed in the secret place, when I was wrought with a needle in the depths of the earth.'"
4. The Maccabean editor has added the following:
 "O that Thou wouldest slay the wicked, Eloah:
 And that men of blood might depart from me!
 Who oppose Thee in their thoughts:
 And utter Thy Name in a lie.
 Hate I not them that hate Thee, O Yahweh?
 Loathe I not them that rise up against Thee?
 To the uttermost, hating, I hate them:
 Mine own enemies have they become.
5. The same, or another, editor has added the concluding verse:
 "Search me, God, and know my heart:
 Try me and know my thoughts!
 See if any false way be in me:
 And lead me in the way everlasting!"

PSALM CXL.

A PRAYER FOR RESCUE.

A Psalm, to David. Psalm 140 belongs probably to the troubled period of Hebrew history immediately preceding the arrival of Nehemiah from the Persian court. The original poem consisted of three symmetrically arranged strophes, each of six lines. It has been supplemented by the addition of a strophe, vindictive in character, probably the work of a Maccabean editor. A closing liturgical gloss adapts the psalm to the uses of public worship.

I.

Rescue me, Yahweh, from evil men:

From the man of violence preserve me!

Who have planned ill things in the heart:

All day they are stirring up wars.

Who have sharpened their tongues like a serpent:

The venom of adders is under their lips. (*Selah.*)

II.

Keep me, Yahweh, from the hand of the wicked:

From the man of violence preserve me!

Who have planned to trip up my steps:

The proud who have hidden a trap for me.

And cords they have spread as a net for me:

At the side of the track have set snares. (*Selah.*)

III.

I said unto Yahweh: Thou art my God:

Yahweh, give ear to the voice of my entreaty!

Yahweh, my Lord, is my strong salvation :
 Thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.
 Grant not, Yahweh, the desires of the wicked :
 Let not his purpose succeed ! (*Selah.*)

1. The Maccabean addition is as follows:

“They who around me lift up the head—
 Of their own lips let the burden o’erwhelm them!
 Let coals of fire rain down upon them:
 Let them fall into pits and not rise therefrom!
 Let not the tongue-man have place in the land:
 Let evil hunt the violent with blow upon blow!”

2. The liturgical ending to the psalm is as follows:

“I know that Yahweh maintaineth the cause of the
 afflicted:

The right of the poor.
 Surely the righteous shall give thanks to Thy Name:
 And the upright dwell before Thee.”

PSALM CXLI.

PRAYER AT EVENING SACRIFICE.

A Psalm, to David. Psalm 141 contains a kind of running comment of smouldering vindictiveness in the glosses, which fortunately are not part of the original poem. Peters calls the psalm "a snare-song," "a liturgy to be used against the metaphorical snares and traps laid by the idol-worshippers."

I.

Yahweh, I call to Thee; hasten to me:
 Give ear to my voice while I call to Thee!
 Prepared is my prayer like incense before Thee:
 The uplift of my palms like the evening oblation.

II.

Set Thou, O Yahweh, a watch to my mouth:
 Keep Thou, Most High, the door of my lips.
 To no evil thing incline Thou my heart:
 That I busy myself in business of ill.

III.

As for the men who are makers of idols,
 Surely I will not eat of their dainties.¹
 The wicked man's oil my head shall not soothe:
 For still shall my prayer their iniquities oppose.²

IV.

O hear Thou my words, for lovely are they:^{3 4}
 To Thee, O Yahweh, mine eyes are upturned.
 In Thee have I hoped, O spill not my soul:
 Keep me from the power of the trap they have laid.⁵

1. Omit the gloss: "Let the righteous rather smite me friendly and reprove me."
2. Omit also the gloss: "Let their judges be cast down by the sides of the crag."
3. V. 7 is also a gloss: "As one splits open and bursts upon the land."
4. Omit also: "Scattered be their bones at the mouth of Sheol."
5. Omit also vv. 9b and 10:
 "And from the snares of the makers of idols.
 Let the wicked fall in his own toils:
 And as for me I shall pass alone."

PSALM CXLII.

A PRAYER.

A Maskil, to David, a Prayer, when he was in the cave.

In its title the psalm resembles those from 51 to 63 as finding an occasion in some historical circumstance of the life of David. It is not explicit, however, as to whether the cave is Adullam (I Sam. 22) or Engedi (I Sam. 24). The poem is really of post-exilic date, a time of great national unhappiness, from which relief is sought in the cry to Yahweh. The psalm seems to fall into four 6-lined strophes (rather than, with Briggs, into two 10-lined strophes), but line 3 of Strophe III seems to have dropped out. The poem is characterized by a free use of the final assonance *i*. This is shown by the underlining of the personal pronoun.

I.

Unto Yahweh I cry with *my* voice:

Unto Yahweh with *my* voice I entreat.

I pour out before Him *my* plaint:

Before Him I tell *my* trouble.

When within me fainteth *my* spirit,

Thou knowest *my* path.

II.

In the way wherein I walk¹

They laid for me a snare.

Look to my right and behold

That there is none who regardeth *me*.

Escape is cut off from *me*:

There is none who careth for *me*.

III.

Unto Thee, O Yahweh, *I* cry:
 I say: Thou art *my* refuge.
 (Give heed, Thou, to *my* shout:)²
 In the land of life is *my* portion.
 Give heed, Thou to *my* shout:
 For very low am *I* brought.

IV.

From those who pursue me rescue *me*:
 For they are too strong for *me*.
 Bring forth out of prison *my* soul:
 That I may give thanks to Thy Name.³
 Then the righteous shall compass *me* round:
 Since Thou dealest bountifully with *me*.

-
1. These two lines are regarded by Briggs as a gloss, mainly because of the lack of assonance.
 2. This line is needed for the sake of the strophe. It was possibly dropped because of its repetition as line 5.
 3. This line also is considered a gloss by Briggs, because of the absence of the assonance.

PSALM CXLIII.

A CRY FOR MERCY.

A Psalm, to David. Stripped of its Maccabean glosses, Psalm 143 probably belongs to the time of Nehemiah. The glosses are prayers for deliverance and imprecations against the enemy such as are characteristic of the Maccabean period. Briggs arranges the poem in two pentameter pentastichs, but the *Selah* conflicts with this division. I have preferred the following arrangement in three pentameter tristichs. In each pentameter line there seems to have been originally a triple assonance, with the syllables *ī*, *kā*, and *ī*.

I.

Hear *my* prayer in *Thy* faithfulness:

To *my* entreaty give ear!

Answer Thou *me* in *Thy* righteousness:^{1 2}

Pineth within me *my* soul.^{3 4}

I spread out *my* hands unto *Thee*:

Like dry land, *my* soul thirsteth for *Thee*.

(*Selah.*)

II.

Speedily answer *me* (in *Thy* righteousness):⁵

Utterly spent is *my* spirit.⁶

Let *me* hear in the morning *Thy* love:

For in *Thee* do *I* trust.

O make *me* to know *Thy* way:

For to *Thee* lift *I* my soul.

(*Selah.*)

III.

Save *me* from my foes, for to *Thee*,

Yahweh, I flee.

Teach *me* to do *Thy* pleasure:

For Thou art *my* God.⁷

Quicken Thou *me* in *Thy* righteousness:

Bring *my* soul out of trouble.⁸

1. V. 2 is a gloss, as follows:

“Enter not into judgment with Thy servant:
For no mortal is just before Thee.”

2. Omit the gloss:

“For the enemy pursueth my soul:
He dasheth my life to the earth.
He hath made me dwell in the dark places:
Like the dead of old.”

3. Omit the gloss of expansion: “And swooned on itself is my spirit.”

4. Omit the gloss: “I remember the days from of old: I muse upon all Thy deeds: on the working of Thy hands I meditate.”

5. As in v. 1 the words: “in Thy faithfulness” have to be supplied, so here we must supply the words: “in Thy righteousness.”

6. Omit the gloss: “Hide not Thy face from me: that I be not like those who descend to the Pit.”

7. Omit the gloss: “Let Thy good spirit lead me in a straight path: For Thy Name’s sake, Yahweh.”

8. Omit the gloss: “In Thy kindness cut off my foes, and destroy all those who oppress my soul, for I am Thy servant.”

PSALM CXLIV.

A COMPOSITE PSALM.

A Psalm, to David. Psalm 144 is really composite, consisting of *A.* (vv. 1-11) a Song of Praise to Yahweh, the Rock, with glosses added from Pss. 18 and 8; and *B.* (12-15) a fragment descriptive of the happiness of the nation which has Yahweh for its God. This fragment is apparently taken from a popular song, in a curious folk-song metre used elsewhere only in Is. 3:18-23 (the song in mockery of female fashions at Jerusalem). It is made religious by the appending of a couplet ascribing the prosperity to Yahweh.

A.

Yahweh, the Rock.

I.

Blessed be Yahweh, my Rock:

Who traineth my hands for conflict,

My fingers for battle:^{1 2 3}

My kindness and refuge!

Deliver me from the hand of the foreigner:

Whose mouth speaketh a lie,

And whose right hand is a right hand of deceit.

II.

A new song will I sing unto Thee:

On a harp of ten strings will I harp to Thee:

Who giveth salvation to His king:⁴

Who rescueth His servant from the sword.

Deliver me from the hand of the foreigner:

Whose mouth speaketh a lie:

And whose right hand is a right hand of deceit.

*B.**A Fragment.*

Our sons are like towers firm fixed in their youth:
 Our daughters like corner posts wrought in the style of
 a palace:
 Our garners are filled and supply all sorts of store:
 Our sheep are by thousands, yea, by myriads in our
 pastures:
 Heavy with young are our cows, there is no miscar-
 riage:
 There is no going forth (to war), no alarm in our
 streets.
 Happy the people to whom it is thus:
 Happy the people whose God is Yahweh.

1. Here follows a reminiscence of Ps. 18, as follows:
 "My tower and my deliverer, my shield and in Whom
 I sought shelter:
 Who subdueth my people under me." (See II Sam.
 22:48.)
2. A gloss has here been inserted from Ps. 8:5, as follows:
 "Lord, what is man that Thou knowest him:
 The son of man that Thou considerest him?
 Man is like a vapor, his days as a shadow that
 passeth."
3. In vv. 5-8 we have other reminiscences of Ps. 18. "Lord,
 bow Thy heavens and descend: touch the hills and
 they shall smoke. Lighten lightnings and scatter them:
 send forth Thy darts and confound them. Send down
 Thy hands from on high: rescue me from great waters."
4. A glossator has here inserted the word "David" and
 generalized the "His king" to "kings."

PSALM CXLV.

AN ACROSTIC PRAISE-SONG.

A Praise-song (Tehillah), to David. This, the last psalm of the Davidic liturgy, is a poem of the Greek period, reflecting the universalism of that time. It is an acrostic in 22 hexameter lines (or trimeter couplets). The *Nun* couplet, however, is lacking in the Hebrew and is supplied from the Gk. It is needed, not only to complete the acrostic, but also to afford the climax of that part of the psalm, namely, a reference to God's love.

Aleph.

I will exalt Thee, my God, the King:
And will bless Thy Name for ever and ever.

Beth.

Every day will I bless Thee:
And praise Thy Name for ever and ever.

Gimel.

Great is Yahweh and much to be praised:
There is nought unrevealed to His greatness.

Daleth.

Age unto age shall laud Thy works:
And Thine acts of prowess tell.

He.

On Thy majesty's splendor and glory
And the deeds of Thy wonders they muse.

Vaw.

They will speak of the might of Thy terrible acts:
And they will recount Thy greatness.

Zayin.

The memory of Thy great goodness pour forth:
And they will shout of Thy righteousness.

Heth.

Gracious and tender is Yahweh:
Slow to anger and mighty in love.

Teth.

Good is Yahweh to all:
And o'er all His works is His kindness.

Yodh.

All Thy works praise Thee, O Yahweh:
And all Thy loved ones shall bless Thee.

Kaph.

The glory of Thy realm shall they tell:
And they shall express Thy might.

Lamedh.

To make known to mankind Thy might:
And of Thy kingdom's splendor the glory.

Mem.

Thy kingdom is a kingdom for all ages:
And Thy rule is from age to age.

Nun.

Faithful is Yahweh in all His words:
And holy in all His works.¹

Samech.

Yahweh supporteth all who fall:
And upholdeth all the oppressed.

Ayin.

The eyes of all wait upon Thee:
And Thou givest them food in season.

Pe.

Opening Thine hand and fulfilling
Of every life the desire.

Tsade.

Righteous is Yahweh in all His ways:
And loving in all His works.

Qoph.

Nigh is Yahweh to all who call on Him:
Unto all who call on Him truly.

Resh.

He fulfilleth the desire of His fearers:
Their cry He will hear and will save them.

Shin.

Yahweh is guardian for all who love Him:
But all the wicked He slayeth.

Tau.

My mouth shall speak the praise of Yahweh:
And all flesh shall bless the Name of His holiness.¹

1. This line is supplied from the Gk.: "Πιστὸς Κύριος ἐν τοῖς λόγοις αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁσιος ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ."

2. A later scribe has added the words: "For ever and ever."

PSALM CXLVI.

THE FIRST HALLEL.

The Psalter concludes with a collection of five Hallel's which, by way of distinction from the Egyptian Hallel, has received the name of the Greek Hallel. The first of these has an introductory gloss: "Hallelu-Yah. Praise Yahweh, O my soul." The psalm is largely made up of citations from older psalms. It concludes with an imprecatory gloss and a liturgical formula.

I.

¹Let me praise Yahweh while I live:

While I exist let me harp to my God.

Put not your trust in princes:

In the son of man with whom is no help.

His breath goeth forth, to his earth he returneth:

His plans perish that very day.

II.

Happy he whose² is Jacob's God:

Whose hope is on Yahweh, his God!

³Maker of heaven and earth:⁴

Who keepeth truth for ever:

Who dealeth right to the down-trodden:

Who giveth bread to the hungry.

III.

Yahweh, who looseth the bound:

Yahweh, enlightening the blind:

Yahweh, uplifting the bowed:

Yahweh, loving the righteous:

Yahweh, guarding the strangers:

Restoring the orphan and widow.^{5 6}

1. As noted above, the psalm commences with an introductory gloss: "Hallelu-Yah. Praise Yahweh, O my soul!"
2. Omit the word "help," which makes the line too long.
3. Note, from this line on, the recitation of the ten doings of Yahweh.
4. Here has been added, from Ex. 20: 11, the gloss: "the sea and all that therein is."
5. Here follows the imprecatory gloss: "And the way of the wicked He subverteth."
6. A liturgical gloss is added to make the psalm better fitted for public worship: "Yahweh shall reign for ever: Thy God, O Zion, from age to age. Hallelu-Yah."

PSALM CXLVII.

THE SECOND HALLEL.

In the Gk. this psalm is divided into two, 1-11 and 12-20. Both are entitled a Psalm of Haggai and Zechariah. But in the Hebrew text of Ecclesiasticus it is seen that between B.C. 280 and 180 the poem was regarded as one. It may very well have been divided for ritual purposes into two, or even into three, according to circumstances. There are no glosses to interfere with the strophic arrangement, but one line in v. 8 has to be supplied from the Gk.

I.

Praise ye Yahweh, for good is psalmody :
Our God, for sweet is praise.
Yahweh buildeth Jerusalem :
The outcasts of Israel He gathereth.
He healeth the broken of heart :
And bindeth up their wounds.

II.

Counting the tale of the stars :
He giveth to all of them names.
Great is our Lord and abundant in power :
To His understanding no limit.
Yahweh restoreth the meek :
He casteth the godless to earth.

III.

Sing with thanksgiving to Yahweh :
Harp with the lyre to our God.

Who covereth heaven with clouds:
Who prepareth rain for the earth.
Who maketh hills green with the grass:
Green herb for the service of men.¹

IV.

Who giveth their food to the cattle:
To the brood of the raven who cry.
He is not pleased with the strength of the horse:
Nor is His delight with man's legs.
Pleased is Yahweh with them that fear Him:
With them that wait on His love.

V.

Laud, O Jerusalem, Yahweh:
Praise thou thy God, O Zion!
For He strengthened the bars of thy gates:
He hath blessed thy children within thee.
He maketh peace in thy borders:
With the fatness of wheat He sateth thee.

VI.

Who sendeth His saying to earth:
Very swiftly runneth His word.
Who giveth the snow like wool:
Like ashes scattereth the hoar-frost.
Casteth His hail down like crumbs:
Before His cold who may stand?

VII.

He sendeth His word and melteth them:
 Bloweth His breath and they flow.
 Declareth His word unto Jacob:
 His statutes and judgments to Israel.
 Not thus hath He dealt with the nations:
 As for judgments—they do not know them.

1. This line is supplied from the Gk.: "And green herbs for the service of man." Both lines of the couplet are borrowed from Ps. 104.
2. Omit "waters" as a gloss of interpretation. It makes the line too long.

PSALM CXLVIII.

THE THIRD HALLEL.

The Hymn of the Three is in imitation of this beautiful poem. The Church is represented as the choragus of creation. Briggs arranges the psalm in four strophes, taking the lines on man to be a gloss. But the order follows the account of creation in Genesis 1. Strophe I. is general; II. the Heavens; III. Earth and Vegetation; IV. Beasts and Man; V. General. It is to be noted that, as in Dante, creation is presented as descending from above, not rising step by step from below. The lower rests on the higher, not the higher on the lower.

I.

Praise ye Yahweh from the heavens:

Praise Him from the heights.

Praise Him, all His angels:

Praise Him, all His host.

Praise Him, sun and moon:

Praise Him, all ye stars of light.

II.

Praise Him, heaven of heavens:

And ye waters above the heavens.

Let them praise Yahweh's Name:

For He spake and they were made.

For ever and ever He stablished them:

Gave a statute not to be broken.

III.

Praise Yahweh from the earth:

Sea-monsters¹ and all abysses;

Fire and hail, snow and vapor :
 Storm-wind doing His word ;
 Mountains and all ye hills :
 Fruit-bearing trees and cedars.

IV.

Ye beasts and all ye cattle :
 Reptiles and flying fowls ;
 Rulers of earth and all people :
 Princes and all earth's judges ;
 Young men and also maidens :
 Elders along with the youths.

V.

Praise ye the Name of Yahweh :
 For exalted alone is His Name.
 Above heaven and earth is His praise :
 And He lifteth a horn for His people.
 Praise is for all whom He favoreth :—
 Israel's sons a people held near to Him.

-
1. The reading *tannînîm* (*sea-monsters*) seems out of place in the strophe and it has been suggested that *yāmîm* (*seas*) would be more appropriate:

PSALM CXLIX.

THE FOURTH HALLEL.

Psalm 149 is similar in structure to the preceding but much more militant in tone. It seems to come from the vengeful spirit of the Maccabean wars. It was used by Casper Scopus to rouse the Roman Catholic princes to take part in the Thirty Years' War and again by Thomas Münzer to fan the flame of the Protestants in the War of the Peasants.

I.

Sing ye to Yahweh a new song:

His praise is in the assembly of the favored ones.

Let Israel rejoice in his Creator:

Let the sons of Zion exult in their King.

Let them praise His Name in the dance:

With timbrel and lyre let them harp to Him.

II.

For Yahweh is pleased with His people:

He hath decked His afflicted with victory.

His favored shall triumph with glory:

Shall shout aloud on their couches:¹—

High praise of God in their throats:

And a two-edged sword² in their hand.

III.

Vengeance to work on the heathen:

Upon the peoples chastisements;

To bind their rulers with chains:

And their nobles with fetters of iron;

To work on them judgment as written:—

A glory this to His favored ones.

1. The reading "couches" is regarded by many as improbable, since the psalm is evidently a processional. Briggs substitutes "at their great tabernacle."
2. "Presumably accompanied by brandishing of swords, as in the Nebi Musa procession and dances in Jerusalem today" (*Peters*).

PSALM CL.

THE FIFTH HALLEL.

Psalm 150 is the Praise-shout sung when the procession has entered the Temple courts. It is accompanied by the full choir of instruments. Both in the Hebrew and the Greek the psalm is preceded by "Hallelu-Yah."

Hallelu-Yah!

I.

O praise ye God in His sanctuary:¹

Praise Him in the expanse of His strength.

Praise Him in His acts of prowess:

Praise Him in the abundance of His greatness.

Praise Him with the blast of the horn:

Praise Him with harp and lyre.

II.

Praise Him with timbrel and dance:

Praise Him with strings and pipe.

Praise Him with cymbals clear-sounding:²

Praise Him with cymbals deep-toned.

Let all that hath breath praise Yah:

Hallelu-Yah! (Hallelu-Yah!)³

1. The Gk. has "in His saints."

2. Literally "cymbals for hearing," probably castenets.

3. The "Hallelu-Yah" needs to be repeated for measure.

The MSS. of the LXX have, after Psalm 150, a psalm which bears the title: “Ὁντος ὁ χαλμος ιδιόγραφος εἰς Δαυίδ καὶ ἔξωθεν του ἀριθμοῦ, ὅτε ἐμονομάχησε τῷ Γολιάδ.” Though regarded by some ancient writers as a genuine part of the Psalter, it is carefully excluded from the Psalter proper in cod. A. and the judgment of the Laodicene canon is confirmed by the use of the expression: “ἔξωθεν του ἀριθμοῦ.”

There is no evidence that the psalm ever existed in Hebrew and it was evidently added after the translation of the fifth book in the Greek was complete.

GLOSSARY.

Acrostic. Eight psalms are acrostic, that is, arranged with the initials of the successive lines, verses, or strophes in alphabetical order. These psalms are 9-10, 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119, and 145. The most complete is 119, where each strophe of eight verses, in the twenty-two successive strophes, follows the alphabetical scheme.

'Alāmoth. In Psalm 46 the title *'al-alāmoth* signifies "for sopranos," probably meaning "male falsetto voices." In 48:15 the word *'al-mūth* (*unto death*) should probably be pointed *'alamōth* (*sopranos*).

'Al-Tashēth. This occurs in the titles of 57, 58, 59, and 74. Literally the phrase means "Destroy not" (cf. Is. 65:8), and is rendered in the Gk. *μὴ διαφθείρης*. But the translation should probably be "Upon Tashīth," referring to a well-known song beginning "Destroy." This would make it suitable for a vintage song, in which the trampling of the grapes represented symbolically the destruction of the enemies of Israel. The prefix *'al* in citing melodies is known in the Syriac as well as in the Hebrew.

Asaph. Twelve psalms, namely, 50, 73-83, bear the title *To Asaph*. By the Rabbis Asaph is regarded as one of the ten worthies (Adam, Melchizedek, Abraham, Moses, Heman, Jeduthun, Asaph, and the three sons of Korah) who assisted David in the compilation of the Psalter. The Asaphic psalms have frequent reference to "Joseph" and "Israel" and are characterized by vivid pictures of Nature and by exalted conceptions of God. The historic

Asaph is mentioned as a contemporary of David. See II Chr. 29:30.

Ascents. The psalms from 120 to 134 are known as *Songs of Ascents*, or *Degrees*, or *Goings up* (*Ma'aloth*), or *Pilgrim Songs*. They form a collection of songs for lay-folk evidently intended for use on the annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem. They bear also in their language reminiscence of the longer pilgrimage from the land of their captivity in Babylon. Some commentators have explained the title *Songs of Ascents* as referring to the steps by which worshippers went up to the Temple courts; others have seen in the title an allusion to the stair-like structure of some of the poems.

'Ayyeleth-hash-shahar. Part of the title of Psalm 22 is *Upon 'Ayyeleth-hash-shahar*. It probably refers to a melody for which the psalm was arranged. Literally the phrase means: "The hind of the dawn," but it has been paraphrased to signify "the hunted hind," a translation poignantly suggestive of the subject of the psalm.

Cush, the Benjamite. An historical reference in the title of Psalm 7. There is no reference to any one of this name in the history of David, but it is supposed by some that "Cush" may be a synonym for Shimei, the Benjamite, who cursed David.

David. The title *l'Dāvid* (*To David*) is prefixed to 78 psalms, 37 in Book I, 21 in II, 1 in III, 2 in IV, and 17 in V. The title cannot possibly signify "by David" or "concerning David," but refers to the so-called Davidic collections, gathered probably in the Persian period. At least from the days of Amos (see Amos 6:5) the name of David has been connected with musical skill and the invention of musical instruments.

Degrees, Songs of. See *Ascents*.

Director. Fifty-five psalms bear the title *l'mnatztzēah* (*To*

the Director). They probably belonged to one of the major Psalters, which we may call the *Director's Psalter*. The term suggests the period of the Chronicles.

Ethan, the Ezrahite. Psalm 89 is entitled *to Ethan, the Ezrahite*, one of the ten worthies of the Rabbinic tradition. In the LXX "Ezrahite" is rendered "Israelite." For the historic Ethan see I Kgs. 4:31.

Gittith. Psalms 8, 81, and 84 bear the musical direction *'al-hag-gittith (upon the Gittith)*. Some interpret this as reference to an instrument, others to a melody, either brought from the city of Gath. Still others, with more probability, connect it with a vintage-song, to the melody of which these psalms were to be sung. This explanation agrees with the LXX and Vg. rendering "for the vine-presses."

Hallel. The designation "Hallel" is sometimes given to all the Praise-songs which begin with *Hallelujah*. More specifically the term is employed for the two collections, namely, the so-called *Egyptian Hallel* (113-118), recited in connection with the Paschal Feast, and the *Greek Hallel* (146-150). Psalm 136 is known as the *Great Hallel*, with 135 sometimes included.

Heman, the Ezrahite. The pseudonymous author of Psalm 88. Two Hemans are mentioned in the Old Testament, namely, the singer of David's time (I Chr. 15:17, 19; 25:5), and the sage of the time of Solomon (I Kgs. 5:11).

Higgāyon. We have this term in Psalm 92:3, followed by the words "upon the harp" and in 9:16, followed by a *Selah*. It probably denotes a lively kind of music on the stringed instruments.

Jeduthun. The name occurs in the title of Psalms 39, 62, and 77. Some suppose *Jeduthun* to be merely another name for *Ethan* (as *Praise-man*), others again take the word to be the name for a certain kind of poem, or the name of an instrument.

Korah, The Sons of. Eleven psalms (42, 44-49, 84, 85, 87, and 88) are entitled to *the sons of Korah*. The three sons of Korah, according to the Rabbinic tradition, were among the worthies who collaborated with David. The reference is probably to a Temple guild by whom, in the Greek period, one of the minor psalters bearing this name was compiled.

Loves, Song of. (*Shir Y'didōth.*) This is the title given to the 45th Psalm, one of the Korahitic psalms and a song of marriage love, or epithalamium. Many guesses have been made as to whose marriage it was for which the psalm was written. Theories range all the way from assuming the marriage of Solomon, or Jehu, to that of one of the Seleucids or Ptolemies.

Mahalath. Psalm 53 is entitled '*Al-mahalath*, which literally may be rendered "upon sickness" or "upon calamity." The reference is probably to some well-known melody, though some have supposed it to denote an instrument or even a certain poetic style.

Mahalath Pannōth is part of the title of Psalm 88, where the addition to the last-named title may mean "to make penitence." The whole title is probably a reference to a melody.

Maskil. This is the title of 13 psalms, namely, 32, 42, 44, 45, 52-55, 74, 78, 88, 89, and 92, all probably belonging to the Persian period. The term comes from the root *sakal* (*to consider*) and implies a meditative psalm. The reference seems to be to the subject of the poem rather than to its musical arrangement.

Miktam. Six psalms (16, 56-60) are entitled *Miktam*, for which the LXX has *σπηλογραφία* and the Targum *sculptura recta*. The word literally means something "cut" or "monumental," and the Miktamim have been explained as "emblazoned psalms," or, as the Rabbis called them, "golden pieces."

Mizmôr. Fifty-seven poems in the Psalter are entitled *Mizmôr*, or *Psalm*, a composition intended for accompaniment by stringed instruments. Some take the root "zamar" to mean "to trim," rather than "to strum," and explain these psalms as "trimmed" or artistically constructed psalms.

Moses. Psalm 90 has the heading *To Moses, the Man of God*, a title possibly due to the general resemblance of the psalm to certain passages in Deut. 32 and 33.

Mûth-lab-bên. Upon *Mûth-lab-bên* is part of the title of Psalm 9. Literally translated the phrase means "death to the son." It has been variously interpreted as the name of a popular melody and as a reference to an event in the life of David. In this latter case, some translate the title: *Concerning the death of the son (Absalom)* and others: *Concerning the man who came between the armies (i.e. Goliath)*. Some again consider that the 'Al-mûth of the title is a mispointing of 'Alâmoth (*the sopranos*).

N'gînôth. Psalms 4, 6, 54, 55, 67, and 76 are arranged for accompaniment "on N'gînôth." Once (in 61) we have the singular form used 'al-N'gînath. The reference is to the stringed instruments, from the root "nagan" which means to play on a stringed instrument, such as the harp or lyre.

N'hîlôth. Psalm 5 only has the direction 'al-N'hîlôth where the 'al is plainly a variation of 'al. The term signifies "to the music of flutes" or reed pipes.

"Orphan" Psalms. These are psalms which, for any reason whatsoever, are without a title. Such are 1, 2, 33, and many others.

Pedaiah is the reputed author of Psalms 25 and 34, because of the fact that the name (signifying "Yahweh shall redeem") appears as an anagram in the concluding verse of either psalm and outside the acrostic scheme.

472 *The Psalms or The Book of Praises*

Penitential Psalms. The seven Penitential Psalms of the Christian Church are as follows: 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143.

Pilgrim Psalms. See *Ascents*.

Praise-shout (Teruah). This term refers to the congregational response made at certain points in the rendering of a psalm, often at the moment of lighting the altar-fire. The place for a *Praise-shout* is frequently designated by a *Selah*.

Praise-song (T'hillāh). This term (rendered by the LXX as *ᾠδὴ*) is used only in the title of Psalm 145. But the title of the whole Psalter is in the Hebrew *T'hillim*, or *Praise-songs*.

Prayer (T'phillāh). The term *T'phillōth*, or *Prayers*, is used in the sub-title of Psalm 72: "The Prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended."

Precentor (M'natzetzēah). See *Director*.

Psalm. See *Mizmōr*.

Remembrance, To bring to. This term (*l'hazkīr*) is used in the titles of 38 and 70. The LXX reads *ἐἰς ἀνάμνησιν*. In 38 it adds *περὶ σαββάτου* (*concerning the sabbath*) and in 70 *ἐἰς το σῶσαι με κυριον*. It probably means that the psalms in question were used at the *Azkārah*, or *Memorial Offering*.

"Royal" Psalms. The "royal" psalms are those which have as their subject the prowess and power of kings of the Davidic dynasty, such as 2, 18, 20, 21, 45, 61, 63, and 72.

Selah. A musical sign denoting an interlude, or very commonly, the place for a *Praise-shout*. The word is derived from the root *salal* (*to lift up*). The LXX translates it as *διαψαλμα*.

Shiggāyon. A term used only in the title of Psalm 7 and (in plural) in Hab. 3:1. It is variously explained. Some take it as expressing irregularity of theme or rhythm. Ewald renders it as *Traumel-lied*.

Shīr. See *Song*.

Sh'mīnīth. Psalms 6 and 12 have in their titles the direction 'al-*Sh'mīnīth*. The term also occurs in I Chr. 15:21. It probably means "in the bass" or "an octave lower." The Vg. has "pro octava." There is little reason to suppose that it refers to an eight-stringed instrument.

Shoshannīm. In Psalm 45 we have the title '*Al-Shoshannīm* (*Upon the Lilies*); in 60 '*Al Shoshan-ēdūth* (*Upon the Lily of the Testimonies*); and in 69 '*Al Shoshannīm* as in 45. In 80 we have 'El (probably a variant of 'Al) *Shoshannīm* 'Edūth. The general opinion is that in all these cases the reference is to a well-known melody. There is nothing to favor the theory that *Shoshan* was an instrument shaped like a lily, or an instrument of six strings.

Solomon. Psalm 70 and the Pilgrim Song 127 are ascribed to Solomon. The ascription seemed especially fitting in the case of 72 as a "royal" psalm.

Song. The title of a considerable number of psalms is *Shīr*, or *Song*. The term seems to be one of very early use. (See Ex. 15:1; Num. 21:17; Deut. 31:19; Is. 5:1.) The word is generally applied to a lyric poem used for singing on joyous occasions.

Teach To (*l'plammēdh*). A title used only for Psalm 60. But Cf. II Sam. 1:17-18.

Yōnath-ēlīm-r'hōqīm. The title of Psalm 56. The phrase refers undoubtedly to a well-known tune and has been translated variously as "The silent dove of those afar off," "The dove of far-off places," and "The dove of the distant terebinths."

PRINTED IN
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BY
MOREHOUSE PUBLISHING CO.
MILWAUKEE, WIS.

